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CRITICAL STUDY ON CHRONOLOGY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Nikolai Morozov was a famous scientist and revolutioneer, a member of the Executive Committee of «the Will of the People» party, and an honorary academician. From 1924 to 1932 he published several volumes of his research «The Christ» (initially «History of Humanity in Light of the Natural Science»), radically revising traditional ideas of the ancient history of humanity.

Morozov's provisions were completely rejected by historical scientists, without any analysis essentially, and the reason is clear. Impressions, ideas, and opinions that a person gets at some time in early childhood – the so-called «imprinting» - are assimilated very firmly, and they are very difficult to change. For example, this is the

case with the ideas of religion. The same thing happens during the education of students at a university. In the first year, certain facts are given and placed in very deep parts of memory; so a student uses these without any reflection on whether they are justified. During the first year, one has perceived and accepted them without any criticism. It was reported by the professor, and so the student just has to pass the exam, not criticize anything. He never reflects on it later.

Anything placed into memory with imprinting is very difficult to uproot. We know this in the example of religion: if a person has received basic principles of belief at some time in early childhood, he remains a believer even as an adult. But he doesn't think it over rationally anymore, doesn't perceive any atheistic criticism, and more so, if he's beginning to think about it for some reason, he loses his belief usually. This, too, explain the rage shown in fighting the infidels. They are burned in fires or killed in holy wars. This is a demonstration of the same psychological mechanism. We're just afraid to change imprinted ideas

and struggle to fight against this as much as we can. It can also explain how science is so conservative. Ideas and results obtained once are very difficult to change. Science does not tolerate new ideas but fights them. New ideas are approved only if they are spoken out or supported by an authoritative scientist; and the more radical an idea is, the greater his authority should be. New ideas require great effort and the longest time to take over and become widely accepted.

I learned about Morozov's books around 1965, but my attempts to discuss them with professional historians led nowhere. Every time it was over with more or less obscene swearing combined with statements like «it can't be because it can never be!». Most polite was the reaction of L.N. Gumilev, stating: «We historians don't meddle with mathematics, so we would like to ask you, mathematicians, not to meddle with history!». Basically, he was right - science should be developed by professionals and professionals only. But at the same time, professionals must answer questions of the perplexed ignoramus in a

concrete and convincing way, explaining what they got wrong. This is exactly what I couldn't get from professional historians.

I had to sort out the problem on my own and little by little I've concluded that Morozov is right in many ways, and who's wrong here is not Morozov but the historical science that took the wrong turn around the 16th century.

Reading historical literature revealed an astonishing phenomenon for me: basically, in any indent of any composition on the history of the Antiquity, a discriminatory «Morozov-minded» glance reveals adjustments and logical gaps, absolutely unnoticeable for «orthodox» reader (for example, Chapter 1, § 8 and Chapter 2, § 6). It was something that convinced me about the justice of Morozov's viewpoint more than anything else.

Meanwhile, A.T. Fomenko heard of Morozov and approached me with a request to express Morozov's theory systematically. For long I didn't succumb to his

persuasions, but ultimately surrendered and read a cycle of lectures in which I expressed Morozov's theory in my interpretation. Later, at The Department of Mechanics and Mathematics of Moscow State University, Fomenko and Mischenko organized a seminary dedicated to Morozov. Based on my lectures and the seminary's data, Fomenko and Mischenko composed a certain text that I disliked strongly and hence exposed it to radical overhaul, mostly intended to highlight Morozov's initial ideas in greater detail (even ones I don't really agree with). But Fomenko and Mischenko didn't approve of my corrections, so I performed the concluding work on my own. I significantly expanded the text later with another, the third volume.

This manuscript was multiplied in INION (Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences) in 1977 (20 copies total were produced) to discuss at the historical department of the Academy of Sciences. But this discussion turned out, as one would expect, to be a dialog between two deaf and ended in basically nothing.

Over the next 20 years, I didn't return to it all. Personally, I understood everything I wanted and I consider (till this day) further development of this matter to be the duty of professional historians, that will undoubtedly come to a necessity to abandon purely negative treatment of this matter sooner or later and research it all meaningfully.

Fomenko took an absolutely different position, beginning an energetic activity and recently publishing an entire series of books in which, in his revision of the Ancient History and the Middle Ages History, he went significantly further than even Morozov himself. Among other things, it revitalized everyone's interest in Morozov's initial ideas again, so Kraft publishing approached me with an offer to release my manuscript from 1977. Preparing it for publication, I didn't add anything new (even if I could) and just removed chapters with the ideas of Fomenko and Mischenko. An influence of Fomenko's initial manuscript remains mostly in the way of picking citations that confirm Morozov's viewpoint.

Even if I consider this composition to contain an exposition of all the major ideas of Morozov, it doesn't mean I agree with all of them, at least because I can't competently judge some of his considerations in the sense of whether they are correct. They are given here anyway, so the reader can have his own opinion. Nevertheless, I performed a certain selection of course, so Morozov would quite possibly accuse me of misrepresentation. So I completely bear all the responsibility for this text anyway.

Recent years are remarkable with a great number of compositions dedicated to so-called «parascience». On the historical part this is «Atlanticism», an idea of the existence of extremely cultural civilizations in the distant past (barely not the Tertiary period); a conviction about the Earth being visited by space incomers, etc. Not discussing these questions here on point, I still have to make a remark that adepts of parascience stand out with their incredible credulity shown in their reference to unverifiable testimony of «witnesses» usually characterized very indeterminately («one pilot», «one tourist» etc.).

Verification of their reference for «material evidence» (say, the notorious «Zalzburg's parallelepiped») reveals that these pieces of evidence either just don't exist or they were either «destroyed» or «disappeared» in unclear and unclarifiable circumstances. In this sense it becomes especially interesting for us, how so-called «the Antiquity History» (unlike, say, the New History) reveals all the characteristic features of modern parascience. Detection of this remarkable fact (in different terms, of course) appears one of Morozov's main merits indeed. The first part of this book is dedicated to a detailed discussion on this matter; the main principles and methods of the research are, too, described in the epilogue.

In literature, there are many totally wrong opinions on the study of Morozov. For example, it is stated that the core of his theory allegedly consists of the "astral" interpretation of biblical myths. But in reality, this astral interpretation is of such little importance that it turned out to be possible to delay its review in this book till the final

chapter of the second volume; and even that chapter appears as a mere commentary on previous volumes.

Moreover, even if research of the Bible (absolutely not in astral interpretation) does play quite a vital role for Morozov, nevertheless, his main statements can be discussed and substantiated without any mention of biblical motifs. The most simple way to see this is to see how the Bible is not mentioned in the first volume at all.

Another very common opinion is that astronomy was Morozov's main instrument (they write that he committed «an astronomical revolution in The Historical Science»). This is also not entirely true: Morozov's astronomical considerations play an important but still supplemental role in his study.

In recent years – especially in connection with Fomenko's publications – people began to talk about the «mathematical revolution in Historical Science». This is, too, unjustified: even if Morozov's mathematically-statistical observations, developed further and deeper by

Fomenko, are striking frequently, they do not possess an independent probative value because any application of mathematics is always, even if implicitly, based on a preliminary meaningful interpretation. Also, statistical effects that Fomenko - not Morozov! - has based his work on, can also be refuted from the purely mathematical position, as far as I can judge from the opinions of my colleagues (I'm not a specialist in Statistics myself).

Frankly, no considerations of natural science (astronomical, mathematically-statistical, geological) can play a vital role in historical research. They should always be interpreted within some basic paradigm and can't stand on solid ground without it.

Conviction in Morozov's theory comes from its synthetic nature: from general theoretical, mathematical, astronomical, linguistic, geological, and other considerations combined (in often bizarre and almost always unexpected ways). Unlike the adepts of the parascience, Morozov in his main critical statements usually relies on the most fundamental historical facts

found in any monograph, textbook, or popular scientific literature. To emphasize this fact, elementary textbooks and popular books are cited in this text abundantly. And because basically, any book was fit for this, cited compositions were not chosen intentionally, but the first to stumble upon were taken. The randomness of their selection, even if it could possibly lead to the use of not the best and the most authoritative sources, had the purpose to emphasize once more the universality of information that Morozov uses.

To help the reader navigate the book, every chapter closes with «Results» and every paragraph - with «Conclusion» briefly summarizing the contents of the chapter (or a paragraph). Summary of these «Results» and «Conclusions» form kind of a short abstract of this book.

All the highlights in citations (with cursive usually) belong to me.

Postnikov M.M., August 1997

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laureate of the Lenin Prize*

P.S. In recent years, A.T. Fomenko with his colleagues released the entire series of books, continuing and developing Morozov's ideas. He's reconstructing the history of the Middle Ages in an absolutely different way. The very possibility of that emphasizes once more how unsteady and uncertain our knowledge of the past is.

Fomenko's reconstruction caused a lively discussion but his opponents - it looks like they are right in many

regards - usually just in passing discuss an initial matter of reliability of widely accepted opinions about the past.

Fomenko's reconstruction can quite possibly be wrong in many details, but this also doesn't refute the falsity of traditional historical views.

It looks like the reliable reconstruction of the distant past, or even its crudest features, is impossible for several more or less obvious reasons. This is an issue for professional historians, not amateurs, even if they are mathematicians and academicians. Too bad historians clearly are not ready to solve it yet.

«History of the Medes is dark and unclear»

- assumed to be spoken by Ilovaiskiy

Chapter 1. ANTIQUE LITERATURE

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§ 1. Tacitus and Poggio Bracciolini

Compositions of the famous Tacitus, who gave us his expansive picture of the Emperors' Rome from Tiberius to Vespasian (see I.M. Troysky's article «Cornelius Tacitus» in [48] for example) in his masterful and dramatic exposition appear among our primary sources on the history of the Ancient Rome.

Personality and compositions of Tacitus

PUBLIUS CORNELIUS TACITUS is considered to be born in Nero around 55 A.D. (this date was calculated according to vague designations of other authors, Pliny Jr. for example) and deceased in Hadrian around 120 A.D. «Biography of Agricola», «On origins, residence, and the mores of the German people» etc. belong to his feather but his primary studies appear as follows:

- 1) «Chronicles» («Annales») describing the history of the Roman Empire in Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.
- 2) «History» describing «the Time of Troubles» of Galba, Otto, and Vitellius, till Vespasian's rise to power.

For long, loads of strange obscurities and anachronisms in «Chronicles» and «History» directed historical criticism to doubt the authenticity of the legends of Tacitus. Here we will perform just a short exposition of criticism regarding Tacitus. We will follow A. Amfiteatrov (see [8]) mostly. A. Amfiteatrov's book provides an objective exposition of the history of criticism on Tacitus, namely exposition for the studies of Ross and Hochart, and this exposition is even more valuable for us because Amfiteatrov himself does not want to reject the idea of authenticity of Tacitus nevertheless.

Criticism on Tacitus

It looks like the beginning of the critical wave was set by Voltaire in his «The Philosophical Vocabulary». Lesser known is the polemical study by lawyer Linguet whom Mirabeau called «The Nero's Lawyer». Pushkin in Russia was among the first to doubt perhaps not very facts of Tacitus but his assessment of these facts at least. But it wasn't until the late 19th century that the major historical

studies began to appear to completely reject the authenticity of the books of Tacitus. Anyway, the nature of Voltaire's criticism was more political than factual: the heyday of negative treatment of Tacitus was still ahead, yet to reach its peak in Britain, France, and Germany.

In Germany Tacitus underwent thorough criticism from Mommsen, Shtare, Lehmann, but Sivers and Hermann Schiller especially. Schiller wrote two capital studies («History of the Roman Empire in Nero's reign» and «History of the Epoch of the Roman Emperors»), coming close to treating Tacitus just like a tendentious pamphleteer, very talented and abundant in his material but unscrupulous with it.

In France, Amedee Thierry was calling for careful treatment of data given by Tacitus and was warning against his aristocratically-nationalistic viewpoints.

In England, Charles Merivale had a similar opinion, and based on his studies a book by M. A. Dragomanov «On the matter of the historical meaning of the Roman Empire and

Tacitus» appeared in Russia in the 1860s. In this criticism, we're the most interested in the alarming fact that Tacitus in his political views appears to be a supporter of the 13th-14th century aristocratic republic of the Italian type.

«New skeptical flow began in the late 1870s and continued in the 1880s and the 1890s. But this time it denied not the facts or visions of Tacitus but Tacitus himself along with the authenticity and the ancience of his compositions. What's interesting is how a hypothesis of a forgery of the manuscripts of Tacitus appeared in England and France at the same time. Englishman John Wilson Ross started it with his book «Tacitus and Bracciolini» published in 1878. In France, Polydore Hochart also known as G. Dakbert took the same route. He released three primary studies: «Etudes on the Seneca's life» (1882 - 1885), «Etudes on the matter of the Christian persecution in Nero» (1885), and «On the authenticity of «the Annales» and «The History» by Tacitus» (1890). In these studies, Hochart reveals a completely new vision of facts and *leads*

faithful confidence in the authority of Tacitus to the dead end with no way out.

Hochart has created the system of evidence for a forgery of imaginary historical compositions of Tacitus (and their attribution to the feather of Poggio Bracciolini - *Auth.*) combined out of several basic statements.

1. Questionable manuscripts in a form of which the composition of Tacitus reached us along with the questionable circumstance in which these manuscripts were discovered with the mediation of Poggio Bracciolini.
2. Total or partial impossibility for Tacitus to write many things included in «Annales» and «History» according to the conditions of his era.
3. Signs of the Renaissance in the text of the pseudo-Tacitus.
4. Exaggerated opinion about the dignity of Tacitus as the Latin classicist. (By the way, the 15th century's typical addiction to secular pornography, combined with other

circumstances, too, immediately raises similar suspicions in regards to Petronius (also found by Poggio) and in regards to Juvenalis, Martialis, and many other classicists - *Auth.*).

5. Latest (according to the commonly accepted chronology of literature) primary historians and witnesses of Rome (Joseph Flavius, Plutarch, Suetonius, Dio Cassius, Tertullian, Paulus Orosius, Sulpicius Severus, etc.) didn't borrow their data from Tacitus but on the opposite, imaginary Tacitus is a simple distributor and amplifier of the intelligence he has drawn from them. He had them all at his disposal and assorted them at his discretion.
6. Literary talent, classical education, and fraudulent personality of Poggio Bracciolini exactly matched the taste and demands of his era demanding a revival of the dead ancient gods, artists, and authors.

7. Poggio Bracciolini was interested and capable of committing this great forgery, and he has committed it.

Let us begin with biography of the suggested pseudo-Tacitus, Poggio Bracciolini" ([8], p 356 - 358).

Poggio Bracciolini

«Poggio Bracciolini was born in 1380 in Terra Nuova, a small town nearby Florentia, and at an early age already has become known as a young man of outstanding education and keen mind. He has begun his serving career at the times of the cardinal Barrie and quite soon we can see him at the court of pope Bonifatius IX in a rank of a copier.

Little by little he rose to a rank of a secretary... one of the editing officers obliged to correct official documents (correspondence, charters, resolutions) sent from the pope's name.

He remained in this rank during the popes Innocentius VII and Gregorius VII. The apostolic throne was temporarily moved to Bologna. Poggio was there with Alexander V when that pope died from poisoning. The poisoner was Baldassarre Cossa or at least that's what everyone's voice of rumor kept stating back then. Cossa was a former pirate, then an archdeacon at the Diocese of Rolone, and ultimately a successor of Alexander V as a Roman pope named Giovanni XXIII. Poggio was a person of complaisant conscience and a typical representative of his unscrupulous age so he, too, remained secretary in the reign of the new pope. He followed Giovanni to a congress of 1414 in Konstanz. But then Giovanni was dethroned by this congress (1415). Poggio lost his position and as one would say, lost solid ground under his feet.

Sometime later he entered the service of Henry Beaufort who was a brother of King Henry IV, a bishop, and then a cardinal of Winchester. Poggio has met this rich and powerful prelate in Konstanz. In those times Beaufort played a vital role in clerical affairs as the Authorized

Representative of the English people. In September 1418 Poggio arrived in England as a part of an entourage of his new patron. But then he realized that he was mistaken about his expectations of coming rich profit so in 1422 he's already in Florentia again and then in Rome. The successor of Giovanni XXIII, pope Martinus V restored Poggio to his former position of secretary at the Holy Throne.

15th century Italy is rich with educated minds and Bracciolini is one of the brightest and the most remarkable among them.

He learned Latin from Giovanni Malpagini of Ravenna who was a friend of Petrarch. He learned Greek from Chrysolorus. He also spoke Hebrew. He studied the ancients with an ardent passion. He could almost never be spotted doing anything but reading Latin or Greek books or writing down his notes about them. He was the real library swallower. When he was young he had the richest collection of the library of Coluccio Salutati at his disposal. Salutati was chancellor of the Republic of Florentia and his books «rather belonged to any hunter for science than

himself». In London, he used the magnificent book storage of Beaufort who's «wandering eternally like a Scythian while I bury myself into books in my spare time». Library of the Pope's palace in Rome can't satisfy Poggio; he writes letters to his friends now and then: send me this and this composition. A list of antique writers he has researched, both Pagan and Christian, is truly grandiose. He's an antiquary and a numismatist, parsing and interpreting inscriptions and medals. At his villa at Val d'Arno, he has collected a beautiful museum of antiquities either purchased personally or bought in Italy, Greece, and the East according to his instructions.

He's a top-class Latinist. Xenophon's «Chiropody» and the five early books of Diodorus Siculus were translated from Greek into Latin with his feather. In his original studies, he's a writer of top-class talent, shining not only with his almost impossible erudition but also with his talent's flexibility of the same scale. His philosophical and ethical tractates («On miserliness», «On nobleness», «On misfortune of sovereigns», «On wretched human

existence») are worthy of Cicero and Seneca. He can discuss theological subjects and Christian virtues in a language that without Bracciolini's signature anyone would mistake for the language of one of the Fathers of the Church. In his chase after Pliny who left Bracciolini enraptured, Poggio wrote a book «On mores of the Indians». He wrote an extremely interesting archeological guide for research of Roman monuments («De varietate fortunae»). He told the story of a Venetian Niccolo de Conti's journey to Persia. He translated «Astronomicon» by Manilius into Italian. Does good sir want satire in the style of Petronius? Poggio offers his extremely acrimonious «Historia convivales» («The Tableful History»). In this book he scourges charlatans, lawyers, and doctors that have become lords of their age, cashing in both huge power and huge capital on human stupidity. Does good sir want a historical study like «Chronicles» by Tacitus? That's what «Historia Florentina» is like («History of the Florentia»). This is a story of great, clear, and accurate tone, a solid picture, and bright coloring. It is full of artistic imagery and

personalities, and also deeply insightful in its judgment and foresight.

And on top of that, the great glory of Poggio was being strengthened and supported continuously by his witty and sage letters. He was exchanging letters with the greats of this world (Nicolas, Laurentius and Cosmos Medici, Herzog Sforza, Visconti and Leonello d'Este, king Alfonso d'Aragona), with most modern cardinals and with almost all remarkable personalities of his era. Splendid letters of Poggio Bracciolini were going through many hands to be reread and rewritten, replacing newspapers and magazines for the 15th century Italian intelligentsia. In a word, this resplendent imitator was a ruler of minds of his era in the full sense of these words. Criticism was placing him on the same level as the greatest authors of the Renaissance.

His honorariums prove how highly he was valued. For «The Chiropody» dedicated to Alfonso d'Aragona, Poggio was given 600 in gold i.e. 7200 francs. With a monetary value back then it was a huge capital. Literature elevated him to a rank of a statesman and he ended his life at the

height of the great and powerful office as a chancellor of the Republic of Florentia. He was a center of literature of his time to such an extent that many people considered it possible to define the early half of the Italian 15th century as «the Poggio age». Even in France, his name disappeared in «Le Pogge», an abbreviation of the surname made into a word for common historical knowledge. In his lifetime Florentia erected a statue of him, cut by a chisel of Donatello. Initially, the statue stood under a portico of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore but now it is moved inside the church itself.

These were the light sides of this remarkable person. Now let's observe shadowy ones.

The great writer had a disgusting personality which made him conflict with every single literary celebrity of his era (Aurispia, Guarino, Bessarion, but Filelfo and Valla especially). And yet in their polemics, all these grand people aren't a nick better than their poisonous and ferocious opponent. Poliziano calls Poggio «the most vile-speeched person in the world. Unlike others, he constantly either

cannon into sovereigns, indiscriminately attack human customs or rankle scriptures of some scholar - nobody's at peace if he's around!». Seems like he was quite a voluptuary person and by old age has grown this little passion into a fair shamelessness. When he already was an old man, he married a young woman. In his tractate «Should old men marry?» dedicated to Cosmos Medici, Poggio cynically explained his marriage with an aphorism, how it's never too late for a man to find a way to a decent lifestyle.

Anywhere in the city of Konstanz, he lives the grand life of a reveler and a womanizer. He's a big connoisseur of indecent art, stories, and rhymes, and in old age, he is also its diligent and unbridled composer himself, which Valla reproaches him harshly for. In a word, in this scientist we can see just as great talent to live for his pleasure as his creative talent is: he's a typical baron of Florentia, an aesthete, and bourgeois, epicurean of the 15th century, a man with a beautiful dream and baser life, the volcano person either splashing with a living fire or flowing with a stinky mud» ([8] p 358 - 363).

Poggio's activity of search and publication of antique compositions

«His grand lifestyle cost Poggio Bracciolini much. It was surpassing his income since his young age, making him live in constant need. His source of additional income was the search, preparation, and editing of copies of the antique authors according to their authentic manuscripts. Back in the 15th century rushing greedily to a resurrecting ancientry, this was a very profitable field of budget. With a help of Niccolo Niccoli (1363-1437), a scholar from the town of Florentia, book publisher, bookseller, and king of the literary market at the time, Poggio Bracciolini set up something like a permanent studio for processing the antique literature. He has attracted a whole series of employees and contractors to this matter, very educated and talented, but everyone - with dark spots on their reputation: here we can see Cinco the Roman, Bartolommeo di Montepulciano, Piero Lamberteski. Niccolo Niccoli was lending Poggio his working capital and served him as a manuscript salesman, so, basically, he was

his publisher - and a very jealous and commanding publisher. He was a very imperious and irascible person. Even such aces of literature as Leonardo Aretino, Manuel Chrysolorus, Guarino, and Arispa, he could twist like a ram's horn, and when he had a conflict with them once, he basically forced them out of Florentia.

Poggio Bracciolini and Bartolommeo di Montepulciano made their early discoveries in times of the congress in Konstanz when the deposition of Giovanni XXIII put them in quite a critical position as abolished secretaries of the pope. In a forgotten and damp tower of the monastery of St. Hallen, «a tower where a prisoner wouldn't survive for three days», they were lucky to find a bunch of ancient manuscripts. Compositions by Quintilian, Valerius Flaccus, Asconius Pedianus, Nonius Marcell, Probus, etc. (we would like to emphasize that for all these authors it was a place and time of their initial discovery - *Auth.*). This discovery not just caused a sensation but created an entire literary epoch. No doubt that Niccoli, who had the lion's share of that treasure, made nice money and was dreaming of

making even more. Poggio, encouraged by such a huge success, was digging diligently (in his own words - *Auth.*) through monastery libraries of England and Germany but couldn't find anything or could only find little. Nevertheless, in his words, he could deliver Niccoli «Bucolics» by Calpurnius and several units of Petronius (most likely fragments of his own earlier compositions. Nobody ever explained the circumstance of these and all the later finds - *Auth.*).

But even if new and original manuscripts couldn't be found yet, the copy trade was going strong. A manuscript coming out of Poggio's workshop was greatly valued. Meanwhile, in his letters to Niccoli, he demands paper, parchment, and bookbindery buttstock now and then. If the publisher is late with delivery, Poggio begins to cry that because of untidy workflow he has to feed his artisan for free. One has to think that these artisans weren't individuals of the pleasant kind. Scribes had a poor reputation in the society of the 15th century. In a letter from the late 14th century, some notoriety writes to his

friend and exclaims with a triumph of a kind that would look surprising to us: «I found an excellent scribe - and - believe you or not! - not in a hard labor prison».

Of course, scribes worked mostly with high-demand secondary products and Poggio's editing was the only valuable thing about it. But the amateur exemplars were made by the master himself. The following example can help us understand how cruel his pricing was: upon selling a copy of Titus Livy made by Poggio himself to Alfonso d'Aragona, Poggio spent his earned money to buy a villa in Florentia. For letters of St. Hieronymus he took a hundred ducats (1200 francs) from Herzog d'Este – and with great displeasure, probably because he was in need or because the product was laying around for far too long. In the age of the Renaissance, the Fathers of the Church didn't sell as strong as Pagan philosophers. Poggio had Medici, Sforza, d'Este as his clients along with aristocratic families of England, the herzog house of Burgundia, cardinals of Orsini, Cologne, just rich people like Bartolommeo d'Bardio. Universities, too, were Poggio's clients. It was

time for them to either begin having libraries or widen their old book storages intensively with help of enlightened rulers and their generosity. Poggio was earning huge money, he provided his children with excellent capital and they wasted it with extreme rapidity. But undoubtedly, for the longest time, until he was 40 at least, he lived greater than his constant income was, and to get himself out of debt he frequently needed some urgent snatch which he had to get with just as urgent means. And choosing these means, he could never choose wisely.

This is what a person that found Tacitus was like. Now let's see what exactly he found and how» ([8] p 363 - 386).

Manuscripts of Tacitus

«Primary manuscripts of «Chronicles» and «History» written by Tacitus and known as the First Medicean Copy and the Second Medicean Copy are stored in Florentia in «the Bibliotheca Laurentiana» book storage. The book storage was found by Cosmos Medici, donating his library along with Niccoli's library which Herzog purchased upon

the death of this famous publisher (1437). Poggio Bracciolini and his father-in-law Buondelmonti were among the book storage's organizing directors.

The Second Medicean Copy is 80 years older than the First, maybe not in origin but in publishing at least. Its first page says clearly:

"Cornelius Tacitus et Opera Apuleii.

Conventus sancti Marci de Florentia, ord.

Praedic. De heriditate Nicolai Nicoli

Florentissimi, viri Doctissimi"

(Cornelius Tacitus and compositions of Apulei from books of the St. Mark Monastery of Florentia, in a rank of a Preacher. As a heritage of Niccolo Niccoli, the valiant Florentine citizen, and the extremely educated person).

In regards to Tacitus, this copy contains 6 concluding books of «Chronicles» and 5 opening books of «History». These parts of this copy appear as a prototype for the rest

of the copies with any ambition for an ancientry, like the Farnesian copy from the Vatican, the Budapest copy, the Wolfenbuttel copy, etc. The first printed publication of Tacitus was released in Venice by Giovanni Spira or his brother Vandelline around 1470. It was printed from the Second Medicean Copy, or according to a legend, from its precise copy stored in Venice in the library of the St. Mark Cathedral... But that copy disappeared. Or maybe it never even been there: the legend just was confused about two similarly named libraries. The usual and commonly accepted opinion about this copy is that this is a fruit of the work of the scribe monks from the famous Benedictine desert of Monte-Cassino in Italy, located halfway between Rome and Neapol.

The First Medicean Copy was purchased by pope Leo X and published immediately (1515) in Rome under the supervision of Philippe Beroalde Jr.:

"Cornelii Taciti historiarum libri quinque nuper in Germania inventi."

(5 books of «History» by Cornelius Tacitus recently found in Germany)

These 5 books appear as the initial «Chronicles» covering the reign of Tiberius. So it turns out, according to Beroalde's picturesque expression, «Cornelius never lost his head through the ages but was just hiding it instead». They think (there isn't any proof - *Auth.*) that this copy was found in the monastery of Corvei. A certain monk carried it to Rome where it was purchased by somebody named Archimboldi, not for himself but for the pope. Later this Archimboldi will become the bishop of Milano. Corvei is a small town in Westphalia, 65km to South-East from Minden. The Benedictine monastery of Corvei found in the 9th century by Ludovic the Good Soul played a vital role in the Middle Ages as a very important clerical and political center.

Two Medicean Copies together give a complete set of everything ever extant from the historical compositions of Tacitus. Language, manner of presentation, tone - all the literary advantages and disadvantages - demonstrate the

indubitable unity of both copies and prove that these are studies of the same author before us. Before Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) all material of Tacitus contained in both collections was considered solid composition. Justus Lipsius was the first to see that «Annales» and «History» are actually two different studies despite an apparent succession of their content and their affiliation with the same author. Lipsius established this division and it was approved ever since.

Style of handwriting appears the essential difference between the two Medicean Copies. The Second Copy is performed with so-called Lombardian Handwriting but the First - is with the Carolin (see a figure in [5] - *Auth.*).

In general, these are the most important features of the two primary copies of Tacitus. The science has been acknowledging them as authentic in a course of over three centuries before Ross and Hochart touched their virgin reputation with their daring hands (and revived suspicion of Poggio's contemporaries, in particular - *Auth.*).

So how do they run their attack?» ([8] p 366 - 368).

Legends about the manuscripts of Tacitus

«Hochart acknowledges an origin of the Second Medicean Copy from Niccolo Niccoli's library as doubtless. But this attachment exactly is what Hochart sees as a key to exposing Poggio Bracciolini's forgery.

How he (Tacitus - *Auth.*) was known and was being read we know from his contemporaries (Pliny Jr.), the Christianity's apologist Tertullian, an enemy of Tacitus in the 3rd century A.D., Flavius Vopisqus and blissful Hieronymus of the 4th century, Paulus Orosius and Apollinaris Sidonius of the 5th century and Cassiodorus of the 6th century (Let's make a remark how manuscripts of all these authors were also «discovered» in the same era with the books of Tacitus listed above and so it can't actually be used to prove the authenticity of Tacitus - *Auth.*). Then the name Tacitus disappeared from the civilized world's memory for many centuries. But actually, the beginning of this disappearance occurred much earlier.

Even though F. Vopisqus tell us quite a flattering story of Tacitus: how emperor Tacitus was proud to be his descendant and commanded all the public libraries of the Empire to have copies of the works of his great predecessor – but literature didn't preserve even the tiniest signs of Tacitus' authority for us. Servius, Priscionus, Nonius Marcell, diligent citers and numeraires of names of their literature, Latin Grammars at the end of The Roman Empire – do not recall Tacitus and obviously know nothing about him.» ([8] p 368 - 369). So the statement of apologists of Tacitus that «Tacitus wasn't there but the memory of him lived on» can't be believed in any way.

I.M. Troysky ([48]) begins his article about Tacitus as follows: «Unlike his predecessors, writing about the Republic, Tacitus when he was describing his activity as a historian of The Roman Empire, made a remark that his study is limited with narrow confines and will not bring him any kind of glory («Annales» IV, 32). To an extent, these words turned out to be prophetic.». Not a single historian of The Emperors' Rome, including Tacitus, become «the

classic» of Roman literature. Tacitus was never taught in Roman schools. Philologists (so-called grammars), the keepers of the scholarly tradition, were not interested in his works. An effect of this lack of attention appears in the complete absence of information on the life of this historian in studies of the late Roman scientists» ([48] Vol. 2, p. 203). By the way, it means that the rest of the Roman historians from the Emperors' Era weren't treated any better than Tacitus himself.

«In the 9th century (five hundred years later!) name of Tacitus surfaced weirdly in the chronicle of Frechulf, a bishop of Leuxoviensis. In the 11th century, it also surfaced in the John of Salisbury's «Polycraticon», a pamphlet against royalty. But Hochart makes a remark that both of these cases mention Tacitus in such a general way not saying anything notable or anything his own about him that there's no need to think that libraries of Frechulf or John of Salusbury could have compositions of Tacitus (We must keep in mind a general consideration: if a source mention the name of Tacitus but doesn't provide any details, it

doesn't mean in any way that it is talking about the exact Tacitus found by Poggio – *Auth.*).

There are monastic legends about the manuscripts of Tacitus seemingly preserved in monastery libraries of the famous Benedictine desert of Monte-Cassino and similar tenement of Fulda (in Germany near Cassel).

The former legend has grown from an excerpt of the «Chronicle» by Desiderius. Desiderius will become pope Victor III later (1086). Back in a day when he was a hegumen of the desert of Monte-Cassino, his monks under his supervision copied 61 volumes of creations written by both clerical and pagan writers, including «History by Cornelius with Homer» (*Historiam Comelii cum Omero*). According to the monastery's chronicle, the majority of these books were stolen during multiple robberies of the desert by robbers and condottiers.

Hochart is puzzled: was there ever a reason for these respected businessmen to rob the monastery library at all? And in particular, if they had to, why take away not

something else but Tacitus exactly? A chronicle of Desiderius doesn't even mention Tacitus exactly though. For example, «History by Cornelius» could be Cornelius Nepos or any other of numerous Roman writers named Cornelius. Hochart is generally quite skeptical about all the legends of treasure in monastery libraries of the Middle Ages. The very legend of Desiderius he considers unnatural. Desiderius was a friend of Peter Damian and they both were the worst enemies of secular education. Why would they put any effort to preserve the pagan scriptures? Both charter and personal antipathy were commanding them to destroy it. This legend is a late artifice and a concession to the Age of Humanism. Abbot Rappe (Abbe de la Trappe, 1626-1700, reformer of the Trappist order and an author of «The Life of St. Benedict») considered legends of works written by Benedictine monks to be a guess not worthy of inspection. Nevertheless, the majority of historians consider (without any documental reason - *Auth.*) the Second Medicean Copy to originate from Monte-Cassino. They also consider it to allegedly be copied in the middle of the 9th or in the 11th century, from

some manuscript of the 4th or 5th century acquired from Germany or France.

The latter legend, the legend of Fulda, is based on a citation from a local monastery chronicle. «And so, in the town named Mimida, on a river that Cornelius Tacitus – a historian of feats that the Romans committed to these people - called Visurgis (Veser) and the modern historians call Visaraka». Based on this excerpt it was concluded that the chronicler had an authentic text of «Annales» by Tacitus before him.

Another legendary copy of Tacitus was allegedly written by a hand of Giovanni Boccaccio for his library. This library is intact but Tacitus – seems like this is just the fate of this writer - disappeared from it and nobody knows where it went and when did this happen.

Hochart is puzzled: if Boccaccio's copy existed, where could Boccaccio find the original for copying? People assumed that he took it from the Monte-Cassino during his stay in Neapol. But as long as Hochart rejects the legend of

the manuscript of Tacitus in the library of Monte-Cassino, naturally, he can't approve its reference in a legend of Boccaccio. And even Boccaccio himself says that his stay at Monte-Cassino was extremely short and he was met terribly. So how and when could he possibly copy the manuscript? Copying, even with the most fluent writing style, requires at least a month of sitting and working. Most importantly, if Boccaccio really was familiar with the studies of Tacitus, this historian would leave at least some kind of mark in Boccaccio's works, whereas there is none. The effect is even more vivid in his historically-anecdotal work of «De casibus virorum et ferminarum illustrium» («On adventures of the famous men and women»). Among other things in it, Boccaccio speak of Tiberius, Nero, Galba, Ottone, Vitellius. But he's just citing Suetonius with certain borrowings from Juvenal though. He also speaks of Christians from a clerical legend. If Boccaccio was familiar with the works of Tacitus, then, considering what a great artist he was, how could he speak of Agrippina's death and not mention the great marine drama written by Tacitus? Or how could he speak of apostle Peter and Paul's death, not

saying a single word about the persecution of Christians in connection with the great fire of Rome? In a word, the most striking pages of Tacitus stayed colorless and mute for Boccaccio. It is clear that he just didn't read them» ([8] p 369 - 373).

These - are **all** the mentions of Tacitus prior to him being discovered by Poggio Bracciolini. So no information of any kind regarding the existence of the manuscripts of Tacitus was preserved anywhere in a course of the entire Middle Ages. We have «to agree with Ross and Hochart in their statement, that *in the late 14th and the early 15th centuries nobody among educated people had the slightest idea about Tacitus*. It was a great and cloudy myth of ancients, contained in hints of antique books. The greats believed in its obscurity, but of course, they dreamed nevertheless: if only I could find it! Idealistically-minded scientists dreamed about it, and skeptically-minded scientists dreamed about it as well. The Renaissance was a time when palace pantries, monastery basements, and trash of rag pickers gave out many literary treasures of the Ancient World and

brought many antique deads back to the life of the Renaissance. There was a demand to conclude a series of findings of the Roman literature with Tacitus. Every bookseller knew that finding Tacitus meant amassing capital. And then demand made a supply. Tacitus was found». ([8] p 373 - 374).

«Finding» Tacitus

«In November of 1425 Poggio was in Rome. He wrote a letter to Niccoli in Florentia that «certain monk, a friend of mine» offer a party of ancient manuscripts to be taken in Nurenberg, and among them are «several works of Tacitus unknown to us». Niccoli got livelily interested and expressed his approval for the deal immediately. But at first, the purchase of offered rarity gets delayed for two months, then eight, etc., all to Niccoli's surprise and concern. Poggio plays for his time with various pretexts and excuses. In May of 1427 Niccoli suddenly finds out that his friend is negotiating the manuscript of Tacitus with Cosmos Medici. Poggio's answer to Niccoli's inquiry was

really unclear. The only clear thing about it was how at the moment, Poggio hasn't had the book of Tacitus yet. All he had was the catalog of a German monastery in Herzfeld (this is when he named a monastery for the first time) and a volume of Cornelius Tacitus was present in this catalog. There were other important manuscripts though, like Ammienn Marcelline, Titus Livy's first decade of books, and the speeches of Cicero (Herzfeld is a small town in Hessen, on the river of Fulda. It seems like a local abbey and abbey of the town of Fulda were united by shared management). It also was the first time when Poggio said that a «monk» wants money; previously the deal was about exchanging old manuscripts with Niccoli's new religious publications. On the matter of the monk, Poggio says some shameless nonsense and lies: the monk is his friend but when the monk was in Rome he didn't visit Poggio for some reason so Poggio had to put an effort to find him in a detour. Books are in Herzfeld but should be collected from Nurenberg etc. It continued when, for a beginning, Poggio forgot to send Niccoli the promised Herzfeld catalog, and then, when the irritated publisher did receive the demanded catalog,

Tacitus wasn't there. The following years 1427 and 1428 also passed in this strange kind of red tape and absolutely artificially looking misunderstanding. Finally, on February 26, 1429, three and half years since this exchange of correspondence began, Poggio informed Niccoli that the mysterious «monk of Herzfeld» arrived in Rome again – but without the book! Poggio assured Niccoli that he had a brutal scandal with the monk so the monk got scared and departed to Germany immediately to get Tacitus. «That's why I'm sure we'll get this manuscript soon because a monk can't do without my protection in his monastery's business».

Poggio and Niccoli's correspondence about Herzfeld's Tacitus was over because their actual meeting was approaching. Poggio spent summer 1429 in Toscana. A circumstance of him actually receiving Tacitus at that moment, from Germany, as he was saying indistinctly, is indubitable. The honor of discovering Tacitus with Niccoli's insistence for search and with the mediation of some unknown monk was ascribed to Poggio once more in the

18th century by both abbot Mehus, an expert in literature of the 15th century, and also by Tiraboschi (1731-1794).

Poggio's discovery got protracted for almost 5 years. It resounded even before it was committed and strange rumors were circulating around it already. Niccoli was very nervous but Poggio was answering: «I know all the songs being sung about this and where they come from. So listen: when Cornelius Tacitus will arrive, I will take it, and then I will intentionally and nicely hide it away from strangers".

Hochart makes his fair remark: «It would seem that the most natural way to protect the manuscript from bad rumors would be to show it to the entire scientific world and explain all the paths, ways, and secrets of its origin. But Poggio, on the opposite, promises to be cunning and play dark once again".

It is unknown whether Poggio and Niccoli immediately published their copies of Tacitus that this mysterious monk has blessed them with, if there was a monk at all, of course. One can think they did not. They kept their treasure, filling

its price up. Copies of the authors were as expensive as rare they were. So exemplars of Tacitus, artistically reproduced by the firm, were floating away to such highly ranked buyers as Pietro Medici, Matthew Corsin, etc. They weren't in common circulation. This exclusivity is a possible explanation for scientific criticism's long silence about Tacitus. For example, Poliziano (1454-1494) either has not seen new Tacitus at all or considered Poggio's manuscript suspicious. Just like Boccaccio above, Poliziano in his etude about Suetonius and Caesars doesn't use Tacitus at all. He does speak of Tacitus with great honor though but only from the words of Pliny and Vopisqus. It's even more interesting because Poliziano should've known the printed publication of Tacitus already (1470, at Spira's in Venice).

Moreover, Machiavelli was a person so often compared to Tacitus later. He was the top-class historian and politician of the early 16th century, intentionally discussing imperialistic topics that were such a burning reminder of the analogy of Tacitus. And he is a graphic and striking indication that a person like him could still pass

Tacitus by like that historian didn't even exist. This circumstance contradicts completely the statement of Gaston Boissier. He had stated that in the second half of the 14th century, Tacitus have allegedly become a deskbook of Italian nobility and nearly a handbook of court politics.

It is interesting that much later when Poggio was publishing his and Niccoli's letters, he lost track of dates for his 1425-1429 correspondence about Tacitus. In his two newly published letters he was falsifying the dates of December 28, 1427, and June 5, 1428, with some retroactive intention. He's asking: «You sent me a volume of Seneca and Cornelius Tacitus. Thank you. But the latter is performed with Lombardian handwriting, and the majority of letters are worn off. But I saw another exemplar written in ancient handwriting (the Carolin one) at your place in Florentia. It's hard to find a scribe who can correctly read the copy that you sent me. Please find one for me. I know you can do it if you want". In the second letter, Poggio assured Niccoli that he sent him a decade of

Titus Livy and Cornelius Tacitus with the mediation of Bartolommeo de Bardis. «Your Tacitus lacks several pages in different places of the manuscript», etc.

With a series of quite comprehensive evidence and through the excluded middle, Hochart determine for a fact that the manuscript written with the Lombardian handwriting and missing some pages couldn't be anything but very the Second Medicean Copy considered the most ancient exemplar of Tacitus. But Poggio also makes it clear that there is another ancient Tacitus at his and Niccoli's disposal written with the Antique (Carolin) handwriting. Dates on Poggio's letters, it looks like one cannot doubt this, are forged, composed post factum after Tacitus with Niccoli's name on it saw the world. They are composed to strengthen the reputation of the First Medicean (the Lombardian) copy put to use in various princely libraries, and also to make way for the Second Medicean Copy (written with the Carolin handwriting). Hochart thinks and proves to be believable in many ways that history made them switch places. Poggio's first Tacitus become the

Second Medicean Copy, and vice versa, Poggio's second Tacitus become the First Medicean Copy.

Inspecting the history of the origin of the First Medicean Copy (written in the Carolin handwriting) it is impossible to overlook how the legend surrounding Niccolo Niccoli's copy, the Second Medicean Copy, repeats itself 80 years later. There is a northern monastery on stage again, and again there are some mysterious unnamed monks. A certain german cenobite brings five early units of «the Annales» to Pope Leo X. Enraptured pope allegedly puts this cenobite in for a publisher of this composition. Enoch refuses, saying, that he's not literate enough. In a word, a legend about the monk of Herzfeld, the provider of the Second Medicean Copy, rise from the dead but this time it was moved to Corvei. As we mentioned already, this legend call Archimboldi a mediator in the bargain. Back in the day, Archimboldi was a tax collector for the Holy Throne and then has become an archbishop of Milano. But Archimboldi didn't say a word about the circumstance of this mediation meanwhile Leo X - allegedly with

Archimboldi's mediation - paid for this manuscript 500 sequins i.e. 6000 francs, an entire capital in the monetary value of those times. For Hochart these eternal mysterious monks without name, origin, and residence are continuators of the forgery system brought into play by Poggio Bracciolini. Nobody ever sees or knows them, but today one of them brings the lost decade of Titus Livy from Switzerland or Denmark, tomorrow another one brings Tacitus from Corvei or Fulda, etc. For some reason, they always come from distant and hard-to-reach North and always - with a product that one desire and the century's market lacks.

On the particular matter of the Corvei monastery itself, where the First Medicean Copy allegedly originated from, we've got quite a negative testimony in a letter written by Poggio Bracciolini himself when he was still in England and then sent to Niccolo Niccoli. This letter says that he does know this German monastery like a palm of his hand and - don't believe the fools, there aren't any rarities in it! Among chronologically close scientists (its first

publisher Bersfeld and ones before him) nobody knows anything definite about Tacitus found in the monastery of Corvei. Everyone speaks of Germany vaguely just like it, too, was in times of Niccolo Niccoli. Archimboldi's contemporaries and friends, Alcati, and Ugelli say nothing about his role in such an important and glorious discovery of the century. Moreover, Ugelli recommends Archimboldi as an individual of such noble descent that it becomes difficult to even imagine him in the sting role of provincial alm and tax collector. In the 18th century, abbot Mehus paid no attention to a legend about Corvei's origin of Tacitus. Bail just reported it verbally like a rumor, an anecdote that «deceased Mr. Fore, Doctor of Theology in Faculty of Paris» passed to him. Fore also told him that pope Leo X wanted to find lacking chapters of Tacitus so much that promised not just money and glory but also absolution. Why be surprised that people hurried to find them?

So both parts of the codex of Tacitus are equally mysterious in their origin. Judging by the unity of

darknesses and legends surrounding them, Hochart assumed that they are both of the very same origin and common family and both came out of the Roman workshop of Florentine Poggio Bracciolini» ([8] p 374 - 382).

Analyzing manuscripts of Tacitus

«Hochart takes a position of a prosecutor accusing one of the greatest humanists of deliberate forgery, so, naturally, as the opposite side, he shall be ready to answer any objection from defenders of Tacitus.

The first objection in regards to Tacitus' inimitable Latin, actually the most important and convincing from a modern viewpoint, shatter in face of the nature of the education of the 15th century in general and Poggio Bracciolini as the literary king of the century in particular. For this writer, classical Latin is a native literary language. He does not write in any way but Latin - and how he does it! In his flexibility of imitation, he's the 15th century Prosper Merimee but even more educated, much deeper, more thoughtful, and subtle. He knows that he'll have to deal not

with the general public - semi-educated if not downright ignorant classically - but with the criticism of the specialized classical education. When he goes to an exam set up by the experts, he's fully armed with his extreme variety of styles. Depending on what his reader pleases, Poggio becomes Seneca, Petronius, and Titus Livy. Like a chameleon of word and spirit, he writes as whoever pleases, and his «walnut finish» is just as beautiful as actual walnut (more so because nobody saw actual walnut with their own eyes - *Auth.*).

On top of that, as centuries passed, a prejudice about the inimitable language of Tacitus has grown along with his authority's growth in general. His dark and unclear pieces, intricate figures of speech, excessive laconism devouring an idea in some places, syntactic errors and inaccuracies confused even early commentators severely" ([8] p 382 - 383).

Hochart and Ross bring up a detailed analysis of the study of Tacitus from a purely literary viewpoint and demonstrate that belief in the pure language of Tacitus

appears absolutely unfounded. However, with this statement, they are close to many researchers of Tacitus.

Then Hochart goes from defensive to offensive and brings up a number of considerations according to which all these compositions can't belong to a feather of an ancient author. We will not observe these in detail (see [8] p 385 - 393) providing just a brief summary:

- **Tacitus' knowledge of the history of Roman Law is weak.** He speaks of an expansion of the Roman Pomerium and makes a remark about Sulla and August being the only ones to do this previously, but forget... Julius Caesar. Back in the day, even Montesquieu noted that Tacitus is lost in the very basics of Roman Law.

- **He's got a poor knowledge of the geography of the Ancient Roman State** (the adventure of Germanicus, the theater of the Corbulon's war, etc.) and even its border which in his times he's pushing no further than the Red Sea.

- **Tacitus can be lost in his own Rome** where he lives and writes. He's reshuffling its historical monuments and

confused about its emperors. The weakness of the geographical knowledge of Tacitus was analyzed by G. Peter for example and also by Justus Lipsius.

Traditional historians dated the time of «the Chronicles'» creation to about 115 A.D. based on a totally dark and greatly contradicting place in the text of Tacitus in which he mentions the Trojan's campaign and makes severe blunders in its description.

- Description of the episode about Agrippina's death appears as one of the greatest dissonances of Tacitus. This episode makes it obvious that **Tacitus does not know naval affairs**. «*He's just as weak in military affairs*. This ignorance is very strange for a statesman of ancient Rome that was parenting his citizen as a soldier first and foremost. But for the scholar of the 15th century, this is quite natural. Poggio Bracciolini was a closet person and the least of a warrior. He never studied military affairs even in theory and learned about war from an imagination of a civilian bourgeois writer and by hearsay. This is how Hochart explained the obscurity and vagueness of the

majority of military scenes of Tacitus. This military story is written by a civilian. A huge list of contradictions of Tacitus was also brought up by Gaston Boissier, but that didn't confuse him on the matter of the reliability of these compositions.

Tacitus' reputation of authenticity was supported greatly (1528) by the town of Lion. Bronze plaques were discovered, containing fragments of the speech of Claudius in his defense of Gallic equality in the Senate. The content of these plaques was selfsame as the same speech of the same sovereign from «Annales». On the matter of the text of Tacitus and Lion's monument, Hochart points out that the only selfsame thing is their general idea, but not the development of speech, not to mention wording and tone. Hochart proves earnestly that the author of Tacitus never saw the bronze plaques of Lion (if they are really authentic monuments of the official act - *Auth.*). But maybe an author of Lion's plaques already knew about Tacitus? In that case, the text on these plaques is the same kind of artificial and free amplification of the corresponding fragment from

«Annales» like «Annales» itself is free amplification from Suetonius, Dio Cassius, Plutarch, etc. According to Hochart's opinion, bronze plaques of Lion - cunning forgery of the 15th century...

Listing multiple mistakes that the I century Roman citizen couldn't make, Hochart points out ones *exposing the author as a person with the 15th century worldview and traditions* ([8] p 387-390). Hochart lists numerous political, economic, religious, scientific, and literary bloomers of pseudo-Tacitus, all of which can be found in [8]. But even Amfiteatrov himself refused to engage with detailed tracking of those shared and similar fragments found in the text of Tacitus and touching text of other antique authors already known in the times of Poggio Bracciolini. «These are known for the longest time already and can be found easily in any research on Tacitus. The only difference with Ross and Hochart's assessment of these touching fragments that put them in opposition to the majority of other researchers is the following: whereas others see this coincidence as evidence of precise facts and succession of

historical knowledge, these two stand their ground firmly: pseudo-Tacitus is a talented person that studied Suetonius, Dio Cassius (especially), etc. to excellence. Then, based on their data and with an amplifying, he wrote his own story, either not afraid to turn it into a historical novel sometimes or did this unwillingly out of inspiration. It is clear how Dio Cassius influenced pseudo-Tacitus the most. Books of Cassius describing a period corresponding to «Annales» and «History» haven't come to us in their original form but only after a reduction, as fragments from compositions of Xiphilinus and Zonaras. This text has provided pseudo-Tacitus with his canvas and synopsis of his story. If you will, pseudo-Tacitus is Dio Cassius who has grown in his talent greatly." ([8] p 393).

Reasons and history of the fraud

«All the preceding considerations were guiding Hochart towards his goal. He had to prove that our Tacitus is a forged Tacitus and that Poggio Bracciolini, so to speak, cut it as forged Tacitus.

Now let's inspect where Poggio's desire and motivation for this strange forgery could come from.

He lived in London, mistaken greatly with his expectation for Beaufort's generosity and extremely displeased with him. He really searched new occupation that would let him quit his services for the English prelate. And then in 1422 Pier Lamberteski, one of his friends from Florentia, offer him a project of a certain historical work. The work should be performed according to Greek sources with strict confidence and in a period of three years during that Poggio will be provided with an honorarium of 500 golden ducats.

«Let him give me 600, and that would be a deal!», Poggio writes, entrusting Niccoli to seal this deal. «I love an occupation that he's offering and I hope to produce a little thing worthy of reading».

A month later he wrote, «If I will see the promise of our friend Piero moving from words to deeds, I'll be glad to get not to Sarmates but even to Scythians for the sake of this

work. Keep in secret all the projects I inform you about. If I'll travel to Hungary, this should remain secret for anyone except a few friends». In June he's still in England, writing Niccoli, «I'm just waiting for Piero's reply. Rest assured that if I am given time and leisure to write his deeds (gesta) I'll compose a thing you'll be satisfied with. I'm in a very peppy mood. I don't know if I'm strong enough for such a task but labor omnia vincit improbus (labor, in that a person does not pity himself, can overcome anything).

«As long as I compare myself to ancient historians, I'm scared. But when I compare myself to modern ones, I believe in myself again. If I'll engage with it nicely I won't lose my face in anyone's eyes».

Several days later he informed Niccoli again that he was ready for departure, just waiting for a letter from Lamberteski.

After sailing from England, Poggio appears in Keln, passing through. It is unknown where he went after. According to Korniani he really lived in Hungary for some

reason. According to Tonelli, he headed straight to Florentia. We also don't know whether his mysterious deal with Lamberteski occurred. The name of Lamberteski disappears from Poggio's correspondence from now on, which Hochart explained with a condition of Poggio himself being redactor for publishing his own letters and releasing them after a very provident selection. But even if the deal wouldn't happen and the job would dissolve, what kind of precipitate could have remained at the bottom of this episode?

This: Lamberteski offered Poggio the job to perform some secret historical study. The secret was meant to be so strict that Poggio had to work in Hungary whereas people would assume him to still be in England. For this job, he had to study Greek authors (Dio Cassius?). In this job, he was going to challenge the antique historians which he wanted and feared. Concluding, an entire secret these people demanded and he has accepted shows how this assumed deed, even literary and academic, still wasn't of a decent kind.

If Lamberteski really offered Poggio to engage in Tacitus' forgery, then he's not just chosen an artisan wisely, but also possessed the moral right to approach him with a doubtful offer like this. After all, he was just asking Poggio to continue something Poggio had begun his career with. Several years ago at Niccoli's publishment young Poggio released a book titled «Commentary of K. Asconius Pedianus on certain speeches of M. Tullius Cicero». K. Asconius Pedianus is an orator mentioned by Quintilian (also found by Poggio - *Auth.*). Nobody ever saw an origin from which they published this «Commentary». All the copies were written by Niccoli based on another copy that Poggio sent him from Konstanz. The success was huge even if Poggio, blushing, already sang his first song and the scholarly world saw quickly that something here doesn't seem right. It seems like Poggio couldn't really be bothered to hide his forgery though. In 1422, discussing Lamberteski's offer with Niccoli, he hinted frankly among the rest of his concerns:

«I didn't practice Latin eloquence for four years already but in the shortest time I hope to catch up to a such extent that I'll write no worse than before». If he pleased, he was in his right to be so, as we would say, cynical. The success of forged Asconius Pedianus caused an entire series of other forgeries on behalf of the same fantastical author's name. But all of them were too rough and were exposed immediately. Poggio Bracciolini just turned out to be more skillful than others. But Francois Homan, a scholar and a publisher of printed Asconius in 1644 still spoke out justly about Poggio's study:

«If it weren't studies of modern scientists that calculated mistakes and infelicities of Asconius, he wouldn't deserve any attention and his study wouldn't be useful in any way».

One has to think, that the deal with Lamberteski never came to fruition, but its idea stuck in Poggio's mind. This idea began developing in several ways, different, but of the same kind. Before he started his swindle with Tacitus, Poggio tried selling a certain magnificent exemplar of Titus

Livy to Cosmos Medici and Leonello d'Este. Once again he's doing it in a mysterious atmosphere, onstage is a distant monastery on an island in the northern sea, Swedish monks, etc. The case here wasn't likely about a forgery of a composition (why not though? - *Auth.*) but could quite possibly be about a forgery of an exemplar. We do know that Poggio mastered Lombardian Handwriting to perfection. He was tempting these princes with this exact kind of manuscript. But this time his business failed and then this precious exemplar was gone without a trace and there wasn't any sound or smell of it. Why? Maybe it didn't exist at all. Poggio was just trying a soil for an order. Or maybe people at the court of Florentia and Ferrara could figure out the genuine value of a thing. Leonello d'Este wasn't easy to trick. This educated prince was nearly the first to claim as apocryphal alleged correspondence exchanged between Apostle Paul and Seneca, so widely known and causing such a noise in the Middle Ages.

It is noticeable how Poggio, so prolific usually, doesn't write anything his own and original in this period of his life.

All his philosophical works except his tractate «On stinginess» are of later origin just like «The History of The Florentia» which is a study of his old age that he had performed when he was on top of his greatness already as a chancellor of The Republic of Florentia. He's studying infinitely instead, systematically and unilaterally, as if he was taming himself for some responsible job on the Roman history of the Emperors' period. Niccoli is barely in time, sending him Ammianus Marceline, Plutarch, Ptolemy's «Geography» etc.

In 1425 variously armed by these preparations he throws bait about Tacitus. How it was just a try is clear from the red tape that started when Niccoli grabbed the bait and got protracted for four years. Poggio promised a study that he in his warm blood was planning to finish quickly. But this work turned out to be more complex, more serious, and more painstaking than he was expecting. So he had to be cunning, wriggle out, come up with delays month after month, and it is possible that at the very end he had to confess Niccoli anyway. That one could see right through

his cunning-minded friend and he also was cleared for Lamberteski's mysterious deal. That's why Hochart thinks that Poggio, even though he started his forgery alone, nevertheless, could never trick Niccoli and this book publisher undoubtedly was his accomplice.

Poggio's sluggishness appeared just out of him being not some vulgar literary fraudster but a great scientist and artist. He could understand the immenseness of a pretension he took responsibility for, better than anyone else. Many times when the book was ready to be released he would stop in indecision if he can release it and then would re-read, edit, and correct it again.

With a multiplicity of proof, even if all of it is indirect, via exegesis, Hochart manages to shake our confidence in the authenticity of Tacitus, in one of two copies at least. But there are two of them. They differ in handwriting and format greatly and they are also found in a span of entire 60 years. Both copies undoubtedly keep the tone and language of the same author. So as long as we tolerate Poggio Bracciolini's authorship for The Second Copy, of

course, this hypothesis opens the door to The First Copy as well.

But why didn't Bracciolini consider it necessary to falsify Tacitus as a whole, with a solid exemplar of one type, if he was falsifying it anyway?

Hochart replies,

-Because by «finding» two manuscripts of different formats and handwriting as if they were excerpts from two different manuscripts from different centuries, Poggio tried to cover up the tracks of his forgery and confuse the scientific criticism.

And also because (a real reason, probably - *Auth.*) separation of his forgery into two «finds» allowed him to kill two birds with one stone. Imagine that the late chapter of «Chronicle» and the early chapters of «History» just appeared. There is a huge interest and excitement in the scientific world. Poggio and Niccoli earn huge money and this is the first bird killed with a stone. Then there is everyone's regret about how this find lacks its head. If only

the head was found! When this scientific appetite for a lost head of Tacitus (Beroald's expression) will grow, Poggio and Niccoli will find it, killing bird number two.

So how come Poggio hasn't released early books of «Chronicle» in his lifetime?

Hochart replies,

-Because in his 30s his life went uphill. He has become rich and lost the need for the business of such a doubtful kind. Compositions signed with his own name already made him famous and rich. He has become a greatly respected person.

It fits with a series of other considerations. When penury threatens the writer at his young age as he's thrusting his way through, of course, scientific mystification goes easier for a person and less disturbing for his still small voice. But an old and respected scientist calmed down by his life is unlikely to get his hands into such a thing.

(On the other hand, a list of studies «found» by Poggio is quite vast even without Tacitus. Besides authors already listed above, Poggio in his youth found the following classics: complete Quintilian, two tractates of Cicero along with his seven speeches, compositions of Lucretius, Petronius, Plaut, Tertullian, some works of Ammian Marcelline, Calpurneus Siculus, etc. The complete list of authors that came out of Poggio's workshop is unknown. Also, there is no complete information on other similar workshops of that time - *Auth.*)

But besides purely moral considerations, there are also practical ones. If Tacitus is Bracciolini's forgery, then its first half, the second finding, the First Medicean Copy, clearly is unfinished work. Creative tension with that Poggio Bracciolini created his gigantic study could leave an author as soon as he exhausted his strength significantly to his tale about the reign of Tiberius. This tale is without a doubt the best and the most complex part of the «Chronicle». Poggio could temporarily put his difficult work aside, moreover, he wasn't in a hurry. After all, finding the

second half of Tacitus just recently and then discovering the first one after a way too short distance from it would be much too suspicious luck. The manuscript was laying on a shelf while its author was enthralled with other works that were more exciting than this tiring literary masquerade. Poggio has grown up. He has become a celebrity, a statesman. Why would a chancellor of the Republic of Florentia return to the work of his stormy youth? Would it even be a decent thing for him to do, considering the nature of this work? Niccolo Niccoli, who could possibly insist to continue this forgery and encourage Poggio, died in 1437. Unfinished work was left to lay in an archive because its author didn't need it. It wasn't sold, and it wasn't destroyed. What kind of master can easily destroy his mastery?

There could've been another cause: fear of competition (and exposure - *Auth.*). In 1455 a jew named Enoch d'Ascoli found several manuscripts of Tacitus in some Danish monastery (a monastery again, and it's at the North again). These manuscripts were «Dialogue about

orators», «Agricola's biography» and «Germany» (see [48] for example - *Auth.*). The language and nature of these compositions are known to differ from «History» and «Annales» significantly as they bear strong features of Ciceronianism (by the way, a detailed investigation of all the circumstances of this «finding» wasn't performed till this day - *Auth.*). «Facetiae» ascribed to Tacitus appeared on the market and a long time passed till this forgery was exposed. Search for manuscripts was becoming more and more doubtful matter. Experts were multiplying day by day. Even in their own market, educated crooks or mystifiers like Poggio himself had to deal with major educated barons. And these barons themselves could teach them a lesson in their own product, both real and shady. Thomas The Sarzanian (pope Nicolas V, 1447-1455), Perotti, an archbishop of Sipont who discovered (1450) Feder's concoction (or falsified it - *Auth.*), Pomponio Leto (1425-1497) who discovered (or falsified) a famous will of Lucius Cuspidus, etc. The market was corrupted...

If Poggio didn't want to publish the first books of «the Chronicle» in his lifetime, how come his descendants didn't publish it? How come these books remained unknown so long after the death of the old scientist (1459)?

Hochart replies,

-Because there was nobody among Poggio's descendants to do it. After his late marriage (55 years old) Poggio was fast enough to produce five sons. Among them, a junior one, Giacomo, has quite inherited the talent of his father but died early. In 1480 he was executed as a participant in the Pazzi conspiracy. The rest have entered holy orders. Three of them died at a relatively young age. Giovanni Francesco was the only one to live till his old age. That said, he united in his hands again all the remains of the parental capital. The latter was in decline. As long as there was something to squander, Poggio's descendants weren't interested in chests with his manuscripts. When the wealth dried up and the last descendant was checking his inventory, he stumbled upon this elder resource too. Its price decreased greatly in 60 years. Development of

typography killed a manuscript. The price of anything rewritten, even by the hand of the great Poggio, decreased next to the rapidly growing competition of a printed book. Only originals were truly valued. And then Giovanni Francesco finds an original of Tacitus, a genuinely precious one. It was that very original that Poggio mentioned in his letter to Niccoli with a forged date of December 28, 1427: «At your place in Florentia I've read an exemplar with antique letters, why won't you send it to me!".

It seemed like the most natural further behavior for Giovanni Francesco would be to carry his find to Leo X, a patron of sciences and arts, and receive those 500 sequins that the pope later paid to either Archimboldi or some other mysterious seller with his mediation. But Hochart consider that Giovani Francesco could not do this. Snide «songs» that Niccolo Niccoli used to complain about and Poggio was afraid of and because of which he was hiding his Tacitus for so long - these songs weren't forgotten in the scientific world. Everyone knew the story of Asconius Pedianus. That way, the reputation of manuscripts coming

out of the house of Bracciolini was stained. Leo X (he was a Florentian mind you, and also Medici, so he knew for sure what kind of people he was dealing with) could possibly refuse to take Tacitus from the hands of Poggio's son just like Leonello d'Este refused to take Titus Livy from Giovanni's father, Poggio himself.

By the way, we have to make a remark. It looks like around that time the accursed Titus Livy also surfaced in a market from some depths again. This time it was allegedly found on the island of Gien (one of the Hebrides). This island was put on the map in the first half of The Middle Ages by an influential and educated monastery of St. Colomban where Scottish kings were entombed. Fergus, the King of Scotland, carried a copy of Livy out of Rome during Alaric's rout and then hid it at the Gien, fearing raids of the Danes! *Familiar environment again: the North, the island, the monastery, the Danes.* This exemplar was offered to the French king Francis I but even this passionate buyer of rarities suspected forgery and refused. So it really was more convenient for Giovanni Francesco to prefer a

detour, a way around instead of the straight one even if he didn't suspect his parent's forgery and was selling his Tacitus «bona fide». And even more so if he did suspect something. However, the story behind the find in Corvei resembles the story of the find in Herzfeld strikingly. And this gives me an idea that Giovanni Francesco didn't know that he was selling a forged document, otherwise he would bother to come up with a newer and more complex environment. This is not a good recommendation for a product - to sell it in the same suspicious circumstance in which a poor quality product was sold once. Giovanni Francesco was rescuing his father's product from the bad name of «songs sung about Tacitus» but he himself still believed in both the new Tacitus and the old one anyway, so he considered a repetition of the situation in which the first Tacitus was found, to be the most convenient proof for authenticity and value of the new one» ([8], p 393 - 406).

Novel or history?

Hochart and Ross also examined the question of whether history or a novel lies before us, named «Tacitus». Numerous references to it being a novel indeed were shown already by Voltaire long ago. "...He has put out an entire series of common-sense considerations, undermining our trust in a story of Tacitus about Agrippina's death. If a legend could harmlessly stand (this was before Hochart and Ross - *Auth.*) blows of such a skillful and apt hand, the fault is not at all in the weakness of the accusatory logic in Voltaire's evidence but in the might of talent in the story of Tacitus. In the tragic pages of his chronicle, he usually fascinates the reader to such an extent that he almost stops caring what actually happened and wants what Tacitus has commanded him to believe, to happen instead. Tacitus is pressing you with an impression like Shakespeare, like Lev Tolstoy, like Balzac. One has to find not just great courage of «my own opinion» within himself but also a significant portion of sensible dryness to walk through the enchanted forest of his charms without

succumbing to its beauty but instead being armed variously with doubt and analysis» ([8] p 324). And as soon as we push this enchantment into the background, countless oddities surface from the depths of the text instantly, insisting that a composition lying before us is, nevertheless, a historical novel.

Hochart and Ross list a huge number of these strange things. We will not focus on it intently and instead, direct the interested reader to studies of these professional historians (also see [8] p 325-350). We'll just bring up a summary of one of its fragments. By the way, this fragment which is Agrippina's death was described not only by Tacitus but also by Suetonius and Dio Cassius so a suspicion that we are dealing with a novel can be expanded to these studies as well.

«So a series of doubtful and sometimes downright inconsistent details surrounding Agrippina's death in stories of three basic historians but mostly in Tacitus allow us to agree with conviction with the opinions of skeptics attributing these legendary pages not to the documental

history genre but a genre of the historical novel. The charm of artistic imagery and intense language of Tacitus have clouded any aesthetical minds as well as minds of anyone liking ethical didactics and parables masked as facts, hiding the artificial nature of the connection of these facts that were far from irreproachable even as an artistic concept. After all, the only thing a historian can precisely and definitely state about Agrippina's death is the very thing that Voltaire said an entire 150 years ago: «I am horrified. I acknowledge that Nero agreed for a murder of his own mother but I don't believe a single word in the story with the galley». In an age of telegraph, telephone, quick publishing, and wide publicity we still happen to be witnesses or readers of a swarm of legends surrounding the death of every major political figure. Quite frequently they become so lasting that the most indubitable, documental, and historical evidence cannot refute it later on. The legend gets absorbed by public opinion. Where no documents and graphic facts are present and only an instinct of public opinion whispers something to you, history inevitably becomes a neighbor to philistine gossip.

Imagine how stronger and more influential this process of «legend creation» should have been in centuries when public opinion hasn't had any other instrument of shaping itself except rumor and gossip» ([8] p 350 - 351).

Hochart has mentioned an extremely strong similarity between the language and tone of Latin compositions of Poggio Bracciolini and compositions of Tacitus, which is interesting as well. In this connection, an apologetic characteristic (see [8] p 407) of Poggio as a historian, written by L'Enfant (1661-1728) becomes quite interesting. «Reading him, one can't but recognize Titus Livy, Sallustius, and the best Roman historians in him». Can't say it any better!

Treatment of Ross and Hochart's conclusions by historians

The first time Hochart suspected that the text of Tacitus was amplified was after he has proven that the famous fragment 15:44 in «Annales» by Tacitus appears to

be a forgery. But it wasn't until several years later when Hochart could finally understand that things are more serious here, not the matter of a particular fragment but the entire study.

Naturally, the conclusions of Hochart and Ross caused a storm of resentment in the camp of historians but they also found support. Arthur Drews was among the people who researched this matter for a long time. Not entirely sharing a base statement about a forgery of an entire composition, he fully supported Hochart on the matter of a forgery of fragment 15:44 (as a reminder, this is a fragment about Christians and their relations with Nero). But on the matter of Poggio Bracciolini's authorship, Drews took a cautious position, not rejecting such a possibility but also not denying that Bracciolini could create this remarkable amplification.

Amfiteatrov's reaction is quite characteristical. Whereas he's unable to counter Hochart's arguments with anything weighty, he writes:

«But more than anything and more powerful than anything, like a shield, five-century old habit for Tacitus' authority appear between us and Hochart's theory along with our love and respect for strict and almost fearsome figure of the Roman artist-historian» ([8] p 409). Nevertheless, understanding the inferiority of such declamation, Amfiteatrov offers his own theory for the origin of the manuscripts of Tacitus, considering maybe not all but at least basic points of Hochart's criticism. According to Amfiteatrov's opinion (see [8] p 413-423) clearly coming purely from his desire to «save» Tacitus at any cost, both Medicean Copies appear Poggio's forgery indeed but he still based his work on some poorly preserved exemplar of the «genuine» Tacitus. Poggio has simply (simply!) amplified it, enlarged it, and composed many things for it. Amfiteatrov can't see that, like always, his attempt to reconcile two extreme viewpoints doesn't actually solve anything. If Amfiteatrov is right then how does one determine what exactly did Poggio write additionally and what is a criterion of reliability of the information contained in «proto-Tacitus»? How does one

guarantee that this «proto-Tacitus» assumed by Amfiteatrov wasn't composed by some other dashing craftsman, say, «proto-Poggio»?

This contradiction shows why Amfiteatrov's viewpoint didn't become widespread. Historians preferred to ignore the study of Hochart and Ross even though, we would like to emphasize, nobody has interposed any serious objection to Hochart and Ross.

When the study of these authors appeared, a situation arose that Drews described as follows: "...we can see how the majority of theologians swear about an authenticity of evidence of Tacitus and that's why they also branded my suspicion about this authenticity as a trespass of «the historical science» and a peak of «the unscientific» ([36] p 27).

Especially irritated was professor Weiss. Drews is reporting how "...at the Mannheim protest meeting he stated that the Frenchman Hochart that I was referring to, by the way, «made his position in the science impossible»

by acknowledging an entire «excellent» composition of Tacitus as a forgery of 15th and 16th centuries. Weiss has exclaimed pathetically after: «You can see what kind of authorities Drews follows!" ([36] p 29). We can see how all these «protests» could be boiled down to bare statements like «this is impossible» that is, of course, the first and natural psychological reaction. Nevertheless, a priori negative treatment of Hochart's vast and minutely argued theory is surprising. Drews writes justly:

«I'm unable to comprehend how dare one to express such kind of judgment about Hochart without reading his study. Even if I was aware of Hochart's harshly critical treatment of Tacitus, I still wouldn't consider myself entitled to write his research off on the matter of the reviewed fragment as his educated German critics do. If Hochart expressed such an extreme consideration about Tacitus then I would consider him, obviously, to have his ground to do this. On the matter of the German critics of Hochart, not knowing him but looking down on this foreign scientist with such arrogance, I can only advise them to

engage in studying his compositions immediately because they can learn many useful things from it» ([36] p 30).

"...Anyway, those German scientists whose suspicion about the authenticity of this place in Tacitus (fragment 15:44 - *Auth.*) didn't arise yet, don't possess the slightest right to shrug with a look of regret and compassion to this «frivolous» Frenchman. In a fight around a book of «The Myth of Christ» select and possibly controversial statements of Hochart were taken out of context, arranged with discrediting notes, and then sent to the press to put the public to sleep and illustrate the negligibility and low value of Hochart's argumentation. It was absolutely not «Fair play» and such fighting technique is straight out indecent. What kind of scientific study would it be, whose value can't possibly be diminished like that in the eyes of the human mass, incapable of independent judgment? And who knows if «the science» until now and in this case wasn't in a state of habit-strengthened hypnosis just like it used to happen several times if this science considered the story of Tacitus authentic without any critical check? Let's

also not forget how tightly this story intertwines with the entire Christian understanding of history and how much first and foremost both religious education and the Church were interested that no doubt in it would arise. That passionate temper of called and uncalled standing up for Tacitus during the last year wasn't coming from their purely historical interest anyway but rather from an interest of belief.» ([36] p 45).

Analysis of Drews is interesting because it demonstrates the reasons causing a priori hostile perception of any statements akin to statements of Hochart and Ross. Religious education of the majority of scientists of that period created a situation in that anything contradicting the tradition of the Church was causing an instinctive aversion to any argumentation. Because even Hermann Schiller himself was pointing out strange contradictions in the text of Tacitus long ago.

"...it looks like in a course of the entire Middle Ages nobody was interested in this fragment of the Roman historiographer. Meanwhile, it was a fragment of the

highest importance for the history and the glory of the Church. Moreover, people just guessed about its existence until they could finally read it in the only exemplar of Tacitus available back then. It was so-called the Second Medicean Codex printed in Venice around 1470 by brothers Johann and Wendelin von Speyer (Giovanni and Vindelino da Spira) and all the rest of the manuscripts appear its plain copies» ([36] p 45 - 46).

The «chronicle» by Sulpicius Severus (allegedly died in 408 A.D.) also speaks of the persecution of Christians in Nero. So it's interesting to wonder, when did this «chronicle» get into history's field of view? It turns out that there is only one existing manuscript of this «chronicle». Historians attribute it to the 11th century A.D., and it is currently stored in the Vatican.

«So this composition was almost unknown in a course of the entire Middle Ages and nobody suspected that it mentions Roman persecution of Christians. Probably because of some good fortune the exact manuscript

speaking of this persecution fell in the hands of Poggio and he read it» ([36] p 261).

Further on, Drews makes a remark that «Tacitus is absolutely not an «excellent» historiographer in a sense of an objective reporter. With his extremely pronounced personality gravitating to the gloomy vision of life he appears as a storyteller, subjective to the highest degree, trying to achieve strong, vivid effects and a gloomy mood. His depiction, especially in the case of The Roman Emperors, can only be taken with great caution. All the historians agree with this and theologians also know it. But when Tacitus is reporting something in their favor, they sing praising hymns to an «excellence» of this Roman historiographer» ([36] p 258).

When Hocht published his works, historians rose in their arms against him and accused him of ignorance. They called it the reason for him being the first person who doubted the authenticity of the books of Tacitus. Drews has commented on this as follows:

«...So when everyone keeps stating triumphantly how not a single philologist ever challenged the authenticity of this excerpt of Tacitus, this is just incorrect. I pity German philologists though, because American mathematician Smith, for example, in his book of «Esse Deus» brought up an entire series of purely philological considerations against the authenticity of this excerpt» ([36] p 258).

Conclusion

Of course, Ross and Hochart's conclusions don't have and can't possibly have an indisputability to an extent of, say, mathematical evidence. But a circumstance of subsequent historians actually ignoring it completely and interposing, we repeat this once more, not even a single worthy objection, is still strange.

However, the considerations of Ross and Hochart lay a heavy shadow of suspicion on the authenticity of Tacitus and the authenticity of the ancient authors connected by reciprocal references. Doubts about the authenticity of other ancient authors «found» by Poggio appear as well.

How come Poggio's forgery was not exposed immediately?

To understand this, it won't hurt to learn in advance, at least in short, about the history of the entirety of literary forgeries (and forgeries of «the historical documents» while we're at it).

§ 2. Literary hoaxes and fakes

We will present the history of literary forgeries mainly according to the fundamental study of Evgeniï Lann [50]. If the information reported below is not accompanied by a reference, it means that it is taken from [50] (or from [7], pp. 655-706).

Church fakes

"Just like a good hunter, the hoaxer walked in the footsteps of the writer's popularity in all ages. Before the Renaissance the pious monk forged the creations of the "church fathers," continuing his work even as the militant church slowly began to retreat to new positions and, with the weakening of its economic importance, its political role, too, waned. In this era mystification was the form of "ideological reserves" and helped the 16th century clerics to hold these positions, enriching the militant equipment of the church with numerous forgeries: the newly found St. Bernard, forged in 1449 by Jean Garland, the polemical book of St. Athanasius directed against heretics, by Bishop Vigilius, the commentaries of St. Ambrose on the Epistles of

the Apostle Paul, forged by the Donatist Tychonius in 1532, etc., etc." ([50], pp. 103-104).

In the 9th century, Isidore of Seville presented nearly a hundred epistles and decrees written by him on behalf of "more ancient" Roman bishops, starting from "contemporaries to the apostles," together with several letters from supposed correspondents of imaginary popes and with the acts of hitherto unknown councils.

These famous decrees "...were accepted without any doubt... In the following century, they were referred to by the abbot of Prüm, Repinet, and continued to be used by writers of similar works until the 12th century, when Gratian based on it his book *Decretum*, that vast body of medieval church law, and what is built on this basis remains to this day" ([7], p. 420).

"The forgery of these documents has been easily proved by gross anachronisms and blunders... The time of the composition of this book must be reckoned between the Sixth Council of Paris, which was in 829 since much was

borrowed from that council by the forger, and the Council of Quiersius, which was in 857, where these decrees are said to have already been cited by Charles the Bald as authoritative documents... ultimately, now it is generally thought to have been written at Metz, and Ginkmar even says that this collection was brought from Spain by Riculf, who held the cathedra of Metz from 787 to 814." ([7], p. 418).

Another famous ecclesiastical forgery of the same time is the so-called "Gift of Constantine", on which the Roman curia based its claims to secular power.

A huge number of documents were forged by medieval monks to justify their land ownership rights.

For example, the French National Archives hold a document dated 558 (!) on the transfer of the royal domain to the Abbey of Saint Vincent and Saint Croix (later the Abbey of Saint Germain de Pré). The falsity of this document has long been established (see[55], page 57).

In Russian history are known forged letters of prince Andrey Bogolyubsky to Kievo-Pechersky church and prince Dmitry Donskoy to Trinity-Sergiev monastery by means of which these monasteries tried to grasp new ground areas (see [55], page 57).

Forged genealogies

The story of a forged genealogy of tsar Vasily in which the line of his ancestors have been carried out down to "the Persian tsars" is well known. This forgery was written by Ignatius "in ancient letters" on ancient-looking parchment and slipped into the library, having been wrapped in an ancient manuscript.

In general, the history of fake genealogies could be the subject of a large study in its own right. The practice of making them goes far back in time. Allegedly early on, in the fourth century Bl. Jerome claimed that the father of St. Paula descended from Agamemnon, that Julius Festus was a descendant of Julius Caesar, and the Phabians (contemporaries of Jerome) considered Cunctator as their

ancestor. In the 9th century, Photius compiled a genealogy for the Thracian peasant Basilius, who occupied the throne of Constantinople, which made him a descendant of the famous dynasties of antiquity.

Particularly many false genealogies were produced in the 11th century in Byzantium. Among the ancestors of Cyrus, Psellus names the Heraclides, the Pelepides, Cyrus of Persia, Creus, and Darius Histasp. Attali counted 72 generations of the noble family Foc, including the "famous Phabians", both Scipios and Aemilius Paulus (see [74], p. 54).

Ironically, these Byzantine chronologies are taken seriously by some historians as reliable historical documents.

Fantastic personalities

History knows many personalities who appeared by accident but instantly became fleshed out and received detailed biographies. Here, for example, is how the

personality of St. Veronica arose. Tradition has it that while Christ was carrying the cross, he met a woman who wiped the sweat from his face and the image of Jesus' face remained on the handkerchief. This handkerchief is found in three places at once: Rome, Turin, and Spain. To explain this miracle, it was said that folded in triplicate, it gave three imprints of the holy countenance, from which the three copies originated, and this is one of the justifications for the triplicity of the deity. In remembrance of this legend, Christ's head is depicted on a canvas supported by angels or a woman. The caption at the bottom is "Vera Iconica", which means "true image" (in Orthodoxy, "non-handmade image"). Medieval monks, not understanding these words, put them together, mistook them for a woman's name, and composed a very detailed history of St. Veronica.

Similarly, two Saint Xenorides appeared, of whom one, according to the 16th-century martyrologist Cardinal Baronius, was martyred in Antioch. The story goes like this: Baronius read in one of John Chrysostom's talks (where

Antioch was being discussed) the greek word "xenoris," meaning "paired harnessing". Taking this word as a name, he drew up, little by little, a biography of the two saint Xenorides, of whom it was as if Chrysostom had spoken of one and Jerome of the other in his eighth letter to Demetrius. A special bull of Pope Gregory XIII instituted the celebration of the day of Saint Xenorides on January 24. But the forgery was soon exposed, and the cardinal destroyed all editions of his martyrologist. A few copies, however, survived in the libraries of Bruges and Chambery.

The words "emitere" (to appear) and "helidon" (swallow), which the monks used to signify the arrival of the swallows in the spring, became the names of Saint Emirius and Saint Helidonia, with detailed biographies, all of which are tied to a historical setting.

The star Rigel ("Marina Astaire") in the constellation Orion gave origins to two saints: Marina and Aster with detailed biographies.

The ecclesiastical formula "rogare et donare" (to ask and to give) turned into the saints Rogatian and Donatian with detailed biographies, having quite a "historical" appearance.

The Latin expression "floram et lucem" (color and light) turned into Sts. Flora and St. Lucius also with detailed biographies.

The pagan year began in March, and during the first week of that month it was customary to greet the New Year with the unchanging formula: "perpetuam felicitatem!" (eternal happiness!). These words were personified not only in the calendar (in which we find the day of Saints Perpetua and Felicitata on March 7) but also in the numerous relics, the number of which is enormous. The biographies of these saints are also well known. Here, for example, are the most authentic details of these biographies:

"To the young women the devil prepared a fierce cow, and matched a human and a cow's sex for a mockery; they

were undressed and led into the arena in netted cloaks; the people murmured, seeing that one was a gentle girl, the other a mother with milk dripping from her breasts. They were taken away and then brought back in their shirtsleeves. Perpetua was the first to be hit; she fell down and covered her naked thigh with her tunic, more anxious for shame than for pain; then, finding her hairpin, she pinned it: it was not fit for a martyr to die with her plait parted, lest she should mourn in her moment of glory. Thereupon she arose, and seeing that Felicitata, knocked down, lay on the ground, went up to her, reached her hand out, and lifted her up..." (quoted from the Lives of St. Perpetua according to [72], p. 272).

Fakes of ancient authors

The first printing press didn't even begin working in Italy in 1465 but in just a few years the history of literature registered falsification of the works of Latin authors.

In 1498 in Rome **Annius de Viterbo** published collections of works by SEMPRONIUS, CATO, and many

other authors which he allegedly found in Mantueno but actually composed himself.

In 1519 French scientist **de Boulogne** forged two books by V. FLACCUS and in 1583 one of the remarkable humanist scientists Sigonius published previously unknown passages of CICERO. This simulation was done with such skill that was exposed a whole two centuries later and even then - by pure chance. A letter by **Sigonius** was found in which he confessed to falsification.

In the same century one of the first German humanists who introduced Germany to the Roman classics, **Prolucius**, wrote the alleged seventh book of OVID's Calendar Mythology. This hoax was partly triggered by scholars debating a number of books that the work of Ovid should be divided into. Despite the author's unequivocal instructions that he has six books, some scientists of the Renaissance, based on compositional features, insisted that there should be twelve.

Dutchman **Merula**, the author of *The World History*, repeatedly quoted long paragraphs from the manuscript of PISO and grammar of the times of Traian that never existed.

Franciscan **Guevara** published a philosophical novel he «found» in Florence, whose protagonist is MARCUS AURELIUS. The historical novel was successful but the analysis found a hoax.

At the end of the 16th century, the topic of Christianity's spread in Spain was little studied. To fill this annoying gap, Spanish monk **Higuera** after a large and complex work wrote a chronicle on behalf of the Roman historian FLAVIUS DEXTER that never existed.

In the 18th century, the Dutch scholar **Hirkens** issued a tragedy on behalf of LUCIUS VAHR, a supposedly tragic poet from the era of August. Quite by chance, it turned out that the Venetian Corraro already published it in the 16th century on his own behalf, not trying to deceive anybody.

In 1800 the Spaniard **Marchena** was entertaining himself by writing pornographic discourses in Latin. He fabricated an entire story out of them and linked it with the text of the 22nd chapter of Satyricon by Petronius. Impossible to notice where Petronius end and Marchena begin. Marchena eventually published his excerpt with the text of Petronius and in the preface among other things also indicated the imaginary place of his find.

This is not the only case of PETRONIUS' fake satyr. A century before Marchena, French officer **Nodo** issued «complete Satyricon» allegedly «based on a thousand-year-old manuscript bought by him from one Greek during the siege of Belgrad», but nobody has ever seen this or more ancient manuscripts of Petronius.

Also, CATULLUS was reissued, forged in the 18th century by the Venetian poet **Corradino** who allegedly found in Rome a copy of the text of Catullus.

19th century german student **Wagenfeld** allegedly took the history of Phenicia written by the Phoenician

historian **SANCHUNIATHON** and later translated by **PHILO** of Byblos from Phoenician to Greek so the student could translate it from Greek to German. The discovery made a great impression and one of the professors even wrote his preface for the book with which it was published but when **Wagenfeld** was asked about the Greek manuscript, he refused to provide it.

In 1498 in Rome **Eusebius Zilber** published a Latin essay called «Five books of antiquities with commentary by John Annie» on behalf of «the Babylonian priest **BEROSUS** who lived 250 years before Christ» but «wrote in Greek». The book went through several editions and then turned out to be a fake of the Dominican monk **Giovanni Nanny** from Viterbo. However despite this, the legend of Berosus' existence remained, and in 1825 **Richter** in Leipzig published the book «The Extant Chaldean Stories of Berosus» allegedly compiled «from the references» to Berosus in the works of other authors» (ref 4, p. 659–660). Surprisingly, academician **Turaev**, for example, has absolutely no doubt in the existence of Berosus and

consider his work «highly valuable for us» ([32], Vol.1, p. 20).

In the 1920s «the German **Scheinis** sold several fragments of classical texts to the Library of Leipzig. Among others, there was a piece of PLAUT's writing written in purple ink. The keepers of the manuscript office in the Berlin Academy of Sciences, quite confident in the authenticity of their purchase, praised it: «Beautiful handwriting possesses all the features characteristic for a very old period. One can see that this is a fragment of a magnificent book. The usage of purple ink indicates that the book was in the library of a rich Roman, maybe even in the imperial library. We are sure that our fragment is part of a book created in Rome itself» ([55], p. 58). However, two years later this was followed by scandalous exposure of all the manuscripts submitted by Sheinis

Fictitious authors

Renaissance (and later) scholars were not satisfied with "discoveries" of manuscripts of already known

writers, they informed one another of their "discoveries" of new, hitherto unknown authors, as **Murray** did in the 16th century, who sent Scaliger his own poems under the name of the forgotten Latin poets ATTIUS and TROBEUS. Even the historian **J. Balzac** created a fictional Latin poet. In the publication of Latin poems, published in 1665, he included one praising Nero and allegedly found him on half-withered parchment and attributed to an unknown contemporary of Nero. This poem was even included in anthologies of Latin poets until a forgery was revealed.

In 1729 **Montesquieu** published a french translation of a Greek poem in the spirit of Sappho, stating in the preface that the seven songs were written by an unknown poet who lived after Sappho and was found by Montesquieu in the library of a Greek bishop. Montesquieu later admitted to a hoax.

In 1826 the Italian poet **Leopardi** forged two Greek odes in the style of Anacreon, written by supposedly previously unknown poets. He also published his second forgery, a translation of a Latin paraphrase of a Greek

chronicle on the history of the church fathers, and a description of Mount Sinai.

A famous forgery of the ancient classics is the hoax of **Pierre Louis**, who made up the poetess BILITIS. He printed her songs in the *Mercure de France* and published them in a separate edition in 1894. In the preface, Louis described the circumstances of his "discovery" of the songs of the unknown Greek poetess of the 6th century B.C. and reported that a certain Dr. Heim had even found her grave. Two German scholars, Ernst and Willamowitz-Mullendorf, immediately dedicated articles to the newly discovered poetess, and her name was added to Lollier and Gidel's *Dictionary of Writers*. In the next edition of *Songs*, Louis placed her portrait, for which the sculptor Laurent had copied one of the Louvre's terracottas. The success was enormous. As late as 1908, not everyone was aware of the hoax, for in that year he received a letter from an Athenian professor asking him to indicate where the original Bilitis songs were kept.

Let us note that almost all the hoaxes of this kind that have been exposed belong to the new age. This is understandable, for it is almost impossible to catch the hand of a Renaissance humanist who has invented a new author. By all accounts, we should therefore expect that at least some of the "ancient" authors were invented by humanists.

New Age forgeries

Closer to the New Age it was not only the ancient authors who were invented. One of the most famous forgeries of this kind are the poems of OSSIAN, composed by **MacPherson** (1736-1796), and the poems of ROWLEY by **Chatterton**; although these forgeries were fairly quickly exposed, their artistic merits ensure their prominent place in literary history.

Forgeries of La Fontaine, the letters of Byron, Shelley, and Keats, the novels of W. Scott, F. Cooper, and the plays of Shakespeare are known.

A special group of forgeries of the modern period consists of works (mainly letters and memoirs) attributed to a celebrity. There are several dozen of them (only the most famous ones).

In the 19th century "just like the old times" fakes continued, but, typically, they were not connected with antiquity. At the end of the 19th century, for example, a sensation was caused by the Jerusalem merchant Shapiro's "found" manuscript of the alleged 1st millennium, telling of the journey of the Jews in the desert after the exodus from Egypt.

In 1817, philologist **Vaclav Hanka** (1791-1861) allegedly found a parchment in a church in the small town of Kraljov Dvor on the Elbe, on which in ancient letters were written epic poems and lyrical songs of the XIII-XIV centuries. Subsequently, he "discovered" many other texts, such as an ancient translation of the Gospel. In 1819 he became the keeper of the literary collections and since 1823 he was the librarian of the National Czech Museum in Prague. There is not a single manuscript in the library in

which Hanka did not have a hand. He altered the text, inserted words, pasted sheets, and crossed paragraphs out. He invented an entire "school" of ancient artists, whose names he inscribed into the authentic ancient manuscripts he got his hands on. The exposure of this unbelievable falsification was accompanied by a deafening scandal (see [55], pp. 63-67).

The famous Winkelmann, the founder of modern archaeology, was the victim of a hoax by the artist **Casanova** (brother of a famous adventurer) who illustrated his book "Ancient Monuments" (and Winkelmann was a professional archaeologist!).

Casanova supplied Winkelmann with three "ancient" paintings, which he assured him had been taken directly from the walls at Pompeii. Two of the paintings (of dancers) were made by Casanova himself, and the painting of Jupiter and Ganymede was by the painter **Raphael Menges**. To be convincing, Casanova concocted a completely unbelievable romantic story about an officer who allegedly stole the paintings from the excavations at

night. Winkelmann believed not only in the authenticity of the "relics," but also in all of Casanova's fables, and in his book he described the paintings, noting that " 'the Jupiter's favorite' undoubtedly belongs to the brightest figures we have inherited from the art of antiquity..." (see[37], pp. 37-38).

Casanova's falsification has the character of mischief, caused by a desire to make fun of Winkelmann.

Of similar nature is the famous hoax of Mérimée, who conceived, fascinated by the Slavs, to go to the East in order to describe them. But money was needed for this purpose. "And I conceived," he himself admits, "to describe our journey first, sell the book, and then spend the fee to check how right I was in my description". And so in 1827, he published a collection of songs called *Gusli* under the guise of translations from Balkan languages. The book was a great success, in particular, Pushkin in 1835. made a pseudo-reverse translation of the book into Russian, being more gullible than Goethe, who immediately felt the hoax. Mérimée prefaced the second edition with an ironic

preface, mentioning those whom he managed to fool. Pushkin later wrote: "The poet Mickiewicz, a sharp-eyed critic and a fine expert on Slavic poetry, did not doubt the authenticity of these songs, and some German wrote an extensive dissertation about them". Pushkin is absolutely right in the latter: these ballads had the greatest success with the specialists, who had no doubts at all about their authenticity.

Falsifications in science

Many falsifications are known in the history of science. In 1726, a book was published in Würzburg, which, in a fascinating and quite "scientific" manner talked about petrified flowers, a frog, a spider that petrified along with the fly he caught, the tablets with the Hebrew writings, and other remarkable findings. This book contained two hundred amazing images of fossilized insects and small animals. Its author, **Beringer**, professor and doctor of philosophy, medicine, etc., giving it a comprehensive scientific treatise about the benefits of studying fossils,

thunders against his detractors who spread rumors that these clay(!) figures were planted in the excavations headed by this professor as a joke, and very convincingly proves that all the findings are genuine fossils. However, the "slanderers" gathered the students and they demonstrated before the public the process of making these fossils. Beringer spent his entire fortune buying copies of his book, but he did not succeed. Forty years later, after his death, the Frankfurt publisher Goebgard republished this voluminous study as a curiosity in 1767 (see [37], p. 37 and [b], pp. 423-425).

As late as in the 19th century, well-known is the scandal of Michel Chasles, who published Pascal's letter to Boyle in which Pascal expounds the hypothesis of the mutual attraction of bodies; at the next meeting of the French Academy, Chasles also announced another Pascal's "fresh" letter to Newton (still a student then), in which Pascal introduces Newton to the law of gravitation. The great scandal caused by these letters a whole two years

later led to the exposure of the falsification. The author was a man named Vren-Lucas.

Other Forgeries

Examples of forgeries, hoaxes, apocrypha, etc., etc., can be multiplied endlessly. We have told of only the most famous. Here are a few more particular examples.

In the history of the development of Kabbala, well known is the book "Zohar" ("Shining"), attributed to tanai Simon ben Yochai, whose life is shrouded in a thick fog of legend. M. S. Belenky writes: "It is established, however, that its author was the mystic **Moses de Leon** (1250-1305). Of him the historian Gren said: "One can only doubt whether he was a self-serving or a pious deceiver..." Moses de Leon wrote several works of a kabbalistic nature, but they brought neither fame nor money. Then a sure remedy occurred to the hapless writer for the wide opening of hearts and purses. He took up writing under an alien but reputable name. The dexterous forger passed off his Zohar as the work of Simon ben Yochai... Moses de Leon's forgery

was a success and made a strong impression on believers. The defenders of mysticism have for centuries deified the book of the Zohar as a heavenly revelation" ([42], p. 143).

One of the most famous Hebraists of modern times is **L. Goldschmidt**, who spent over 20 years on a critical edition of the first complete translation into German of the Babylonian Talmud. In 1896 (when he was 25 years old) Goldschmidt published an allegedly newly discovered Talmudic work in Aramaic, *The Book of Peace*. Almost immediately, however, it was proved that this book was Goldschmidt's own translation of the Ethiopian work *Hexameron* by Pseudo-Epiphanes (see [162], vol. 2, p. 777 and [b], p. 658).

Voltaire found in the Paris National Library a manuscript commenting on the Vedas. He had no doubt that the manuscript had been written by the Brahmins before Alexander the Great's campaign to India. Voltaire's authority helped to publish a French translation of the work in 1778. However, it soon became clear that Voltaire had fallen victim to a hoax.

In India, in the library of missionaries, forged commentaries of the same religious and political nature were found in other parts of the Vedas, also attributed to the Brahmins. The English Sanskritologist Joyce was misled by a similar forgery, when he translated verses from the Purana which he discovered, setting forth the history of Noah, and written by some Hindu in the form of an ancient Sanskrit manuscript.

A great sensation was caused at one time by the discovery of the Italian antiquarian **Curzio**. In 1637 he published Fragments of Etruscan Antiquity as if by manuscripts he had found buried in the ground. The forgery was quickly exposed: Curzio himself had buried the parchment he had written to give it an ancient appearance.

In 1762, Vella, a chaplain of the Order of Malta, accompanied the Arab ambassador to Palermo and decided to "help" the historians of Sicily to find materials to illuminate its Arab period. After the ambassador's departure, Vella spread the rumor that this diplomat had given him an ancient Arabic manuscript containing

correspondence between the authorities of Arabia and the Arab governors of Sicily. In 1789 an Italian "translation" of this manuscript appeared. The scandalous and in many respects remarkable story of the exposure of this forgery is given in [7], p. 697. 697.

Conclusion

In the introduction to his book, Lann writes:

"...the history of world literature, aware of the falsification of many of its monuments, *tries to forget it*.

Erasmus complained bitterly *in the 16th century that there was not a single text of the "the fathers of the church"* (i.e. the first four centuries of Christianity. - *Auth.*), *which could be unquestionably recognized as authentic*. The fate of literary monuments may be equally unenviable. At the very end of the 17th century the Jesuit scholar Hardouin... argued that only Homer, Herodotus, Cicero, Pliny, the Satires of Horace, and the Georgics of Virgil belonged to the ancient world. As for the other works of antiquity...

they were all created in the 13th century A.D. The proofs of the Jesuit scholar in his time have been easily refuted (I wonder how? - Author.), but there is hardly a single researcher who would claim that the surviving classics of Greece and Rome are not mutilated by the copyists.

It is enough to raise this question (about the authenticity of the manuscripts of the classics. - Auth.) to recognize *the complete impossibility* of establishing where in the past the "authentic" classic ends and the falsified one begins. In fact, the authentic Sophocles and Titus Livy are unknown... The subtlest and most rigorous criticism of the texts is powerless to detect later distortions of the classics. Traces which would lead to the authentic texts are cut off" ([50], pp. 5-7).

In general, one can quite agree with these final conclusions of Lann, but one cannot but note a certain inconsistency in his conclusions, caused by an a priori confidence in the existence of "authentic texts," which in fact is not based on anything factual, because, as Lann himself writes, "traces... are cut off".

It is also worth adding that historians are extremely reluctant to part with even works whose apocryphal nature has been proved by themselves. They number them in the category of so-called pseudepigraphic literature (pseudo-Clement, pseudo-Justus, etc.) and do not disdain to use them. This position is completely understandable and is only a logical development of the general attitude to "ancient" monuments: there are so few of them that it pains to exclude even the dubious ones from circulation.

Causes of fraud

Reasons for fraud are as varied as life itself.

Little is documented about the motives of falsification in The Middle Ages. Therefore we are forced to analyze this issue based on the materials of the New Time. However, there is no reason why the general conclusions obtained from this material would not apply to more ancient times.

1. An extensive class of imitations is purely literary hoaxes and stylizations. As a rule, if the hoax is

successful, authors quickly and proudly reveal their deception (a striking example is a hoax made by Merimee and also the hoax from Louis).

2. Apparently, fragments from Cicero falsified by Sigonius belong to the same class.
3. But if such mystification is done skillfully and besides, its author for some reason did not confess to his forgery, it becomes very difficult to expose.
4. It is terrible to think how many such mystifications were done in the Renaissance (to make a bet, just for fun, to test one's abilities, etc.) but subsequently were taken seriously. However, it must be assumed that such kinds of «ancient» works belong to «small-scale» genres only (poems, excerpts, letters, etc.).
5. Close to them are also frauds in which the young author tries to establish his self-esteem or test his strength in the genre which guarantees him

protection in case of failure. For example, fakes from Macpherson and Chatterton belong to this class apparently (the latter case appeared a rare pathology of complete identification with adored ancient authors). Cologne, in response to the theater's inattention to the plays he wrote, reacted by faking Moliere, etc.

6. Let us note that, usually, the most famous falsifiers of this type did not manifest themselves in any way in the future. For example, Airland, who forged Shakespeare himself, however, became a very mediocre writer later.
7. Even more malicious are frauds made by young philologists in order to quickly become famous (for example, Wagenfeld). More mature men of science falsified other people's works to prove a particular idea (Prolucius) or fill the gaps in our knowledge (Higuera).

8. «Filling» falsifications also include biographies of fantastic personalities like «St. Veronica», etc.
9. Many falsifiers were motivated (among other things) by considerations of political or ideological nature (Hanka).
10. As a special case of former falsifications, it is necessary to single out the monastic falsifications of works of the «fathers of the church», decrees of the popes, etc.
11. Very often the book was apocryphed to antiquity because of the accusatory, anticlerical, or freethinking nature of the work, i.e. if publication with the author's real name was fraught with grave consequences.
12. Finally, last but not least, is the urge for elementary profit. There are so many examples that there's no point in giving them.

Exposing the fraud

If the falsification is made skillfully, its exposure is a problem of tremendous difficulty and usually (if the falsifier himself does not confess) happens by pure chance (for example, Sigonius). Since, as Lann noted, history tends to forget about its falsifications, it turns out that, as time passes, exposing a falsification becomes more and more difficult (for example, Tacitus). Therefore, **no doubt that a great number of falsifications (especially humanistic) remain unexposed till this day.**

In this regard, of particular interest is the information about the circumstances of the discovery of certain manuscripts. We saw in the example of Tacitus and will see later in the example of many other essays «discovered» in the Renaissance that this information is very scarce and even contradictory. There are almost no names in it and instead, it is only reported about «nameless monks» that brought invaluable manuscripts «from someplace in the North» after they were «forgotten» for many centuries. Therefore it is impossible to judge the authenticity of

manuscripts based on this information. On the contrary, the very inconsistency of this information lead (just like in the case of Tacitus) to serious doubts.

But what is really strange is how there is usually no information on the circumstances of the manuscript discovery even in the 19th century! Discoverers either report unverifiable information such as «bought at the eastern bazaar» or «found in the monastery basement unbeknownst (!) to the monks» or they are completely silent. We will return to it time and again, but for the time being, we will only quote the famous scientist professor Szalinsky.

«The past 1891 will long remain memorable in the history of classical philology. It gave us, in addition to various small novelties, two large and precious gifts - Aristotle's book on the Athenian state and the everyday scenes of Herod. What fluke made these two finds possible? Obligated to know this, just keep a **stubborn and meaningful silence**. The mere fact itself of coincidence remains indubitable and with the establishment of this fact

any reason to ask oneself this question disappear...» ([72], p. 96).

But hey, it wouldn't hurt to ask "those who ought to know" where they got these manuscripts from. After all, as the examples show, neither high academic titles nor recognized honesty in everyday life guarantee against forgeries. However, as Engels noted, there are no people more gullible than scientists.

§ 3. Figures of the Renaissance

Yet we should not think that the Renaissance figures were all falsifiers like Poggio. On the contrary, for the most part, they were honest men, genuinely enthusiastic about the prospects that opened up before them.

And one of the first was the famous Petrarch.

Petrarch

At the beginning of the Renaissance stands the colossal figure of Francesco Petrarch (the 600th anniversary of his death was noted solemnly in 1974). As Leonardo Bruni said, Petrarch "was the first to possess such subtlety of mind that he was able to understand and bring to light the ancient elegance of a style hitherto lost and forgotten". Pier Paolo Vergerio, stressing the importance of Petrarch's work in resurrecting the classical style, exclaimed: "Who could have stepped into the clear light of virtue and knowledge in the midst of so many foul vices, in the midst of such darkness of ignorance!"

Such a famous personality could not, of course, be bypassed by falsifiers. And, indeed, there is known, for example, a copy of Virgil allegedly belonging to Petrarch, on which there is his "handwritten" record of his first meeting with Laura on April 6, 1327, on Good Friday. "Petrarch's handwriting was forged perfectly, but a calendar reference reveals that April 6, 1327, was Monday" ([50], pp. 8-9).

Contrary to popular opinion, it should be emphasized with all its force that **on the whole Petrarch's personality seems largely obscure and surrounded by many legends, from under which reality barely emerges.**

Already an established and famous poet, Petrarch entered the second period of his life - a period of wandering. In 1333 he traveled through France, Flandria, and Germany. "Traveling through Europe, Petrarch established personal contacts with scholars, examined monastery libraries in search of forgotten manuscripts of ancient authors, and studied the monuments of Rome's former greatness. In Paris, he was close with Dionysius

(Dionigi) de San Sepolcro, a learned monk, theologian, astrologer, and commentator of Valerius Maximus, Ovid, Virgil, Seneca, and Aristotle. Dionysius gave him the Confessions of Bl. Augustine. At this time Augustine was to the young Petrarch not so much a theologian and one of the fathers of the church as an ancient writer, an excellent stylist, distinguished by 'Roman eloquence'" ([33], p. 59).

Petrarch becomes one of the first and most ardent propagators of ancient authors and, in particular, of the "greatness of ancient Rome". He was a man with a keen, slightly hysterical perception of reality, constantly wishful thinking and coming to a holy delight at the sight of the ruins of antiquity in Italy.

In 1337 Petrarch visited the eternal city for the first time. He was astonished: "Rome seemed to me even greater than I had imagined, its ruins especially great... I am no longer surprised that this city conquered the world, rather, I am surprised that I conquered it so late".

Rome and its surroundings greeted Petrarch with a *chaos of legends*, from which the poet selected those that seemed to him "historical memories," thus forming already a kind of unified legend. "In Padua, the tomb of Antenor was shown, in Milano the statue of Hercules was treated with reverence. In Pisa, they claimed that it was founded by Pelops, referring to the name - Peloponnesian (this! - Auth.) Pisa. The Venetians said that Venice was built from the stones of destroyed Troy. There was an opinion that Achilles once ruled in Abruzzi, Diomedes in Apuglia, Agamemnon in Sicily, Evander in Piedmont, and Hercules in Calabria. Apollo was regarded at one time as an astrologer, at another as a devil, and even as the god of the Saracens. The ancient writers had their careers changed: Plato became a doctor (!-Author) and Cicero a knight and a troubadour (!! -Author). Virgil was considered a magician..." ([28], p. 72).

This totally unified chaos of legends and literary sources contradicted real historical monuments. Petrarch wrote: "Where are the thermae of Diocletian and

Caracalla? Where is the cymbrium of Mars the Avenger? Where are the shrines of Jupiter the Thunderer on the Capitol and Apollo on the Palatine? Where are the portico of Apollo and the basilica of Gaius and Lucius, where are the portico of Livia and the theater of Marcellus? Where is the temple of Hercules and the Muses built by Marius Philip, and that of Diana by Lucius Cornificius, where is the temple of the free arts by Asinius Pollion, where is the Balboa Theater, the amphitheater of Statilius Taurus? Where are the innumerable structures? Agrippa's, of which only the Pantheon survived? Where are the magnificent palaces of the emperors? *In books you do find it all*, but when you look for them in the City, it turns out that they have disappeared or only a pitiful trace remains of them." The haze of a dream so shrouded Petrarch's gaze that, looking at the distinct inscription on the pyramid of Cestius, he continued to assure himself that this was Remus' tomb! The actual reality of Rome was surprising to Petrarch. The Colosseum was somehow the castle and fortress of a feudal family, the same fate befell the "Mausoleum of Hadrian,"

the "theater of Marcellus," and the arch of "Septimius Severus".

"With Petrarch's arrival in Rome begins a new epoch in the reassessment of the decline of the great city. Petrarch was the first man of the new age whose eyes filled with tears at the sight of the ruined columns and from the mere memory of forgotten names, whose heart was stirred by the mute testimony of the stones" ([28], p. 73). Petrarch himself wrote: "The remains of ancient walls, awe- or fear-inspiring when pictures of the past are recalled..." Petrarch's attitude to Rome is vividly manifested, for example, in a poetic letter to Paola Annibaldi: "Honor and praise to you if you preserve these walls, for they speak of how glorious Rome was while it stood inviolable."

Antique Literature and Petrarch

Petrarch was active: he sought out statues, collected Roman medals, tried to restore Rome's ancient printing press, etc. But Petrarch devoted most of his energy to

searching for and commenting on the works of the "ancient classics".

A list of books he supposedly owned has survived, made by him in 1336, on the last page of a Latin codex now in the National Library of Paris. Whether Petrarch had, besides these names, the originals of their works, is unknown. The list contains the following names: Horace, Ovid, Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus, Persius, Juvenal, Claudian, Plautus, Terentius, Titus Livy, Sallustius, Suetonius, Florus, Eutropius, Justin, Orosius, Valerius Maximus, Quintilian, Varro, Pliny, Apuleius, Aulus Helius, Macrobius, Vitruvius, Marcian Capella, Pomponius Mela, Cassiodorus, Boetius. In addition, the names of many of the church fathers are also listed on this page.

Petrarch replenished his archives "throughout his life with the help of friends and his many foreign correspondents, who sought out and transcribed forgotten and half-forgotten manuscripts for him" ([331, p. 87).

Petrarch was constantly engaged in copying not only his own manuscripts but also those of others. As his income increased, he organized a whole workshop (firm) employing secretaries and copyists, as he himself repeatedly mentioned in his letters. His passion for collecting ancient books was known to all. In almost every letter to friends he reminds of it: "If I am dear to you, do this: find educated and trustworthy people, let them shake all Tuscany, dig through the closets of scholars, both spiritual and secular." He pays generously for the findings, and they flock to him from everywhere.

Experts on Petrarch's biography write enthusiastically, "It was essentially the first of those glorious, discovery-rich voyages which humanists of later generations will undertake, setting out, like Columbus, on wanderings not to conquer islands and continents, but in search of rat-gnawn parchments" ([28], p. 63).

"He himself made several important discoveries. For example, in 1333 in Liège, he discovered two speeches of Cicero, hitherto unknown to anyone. One of them was a

speech entitled "In defense of the poet Archius," which had a great influence on the humanistic understanding of the social and educational role of literature.

Then, in 1334, in Verona Petrarch found Cicero's letters to Atticus, Quintus, and Brutus. This, too, was an important discovery... Petrarch believed, not without reason, that it was he who revived in Europe the interest in the philosophy and publicistic writings of the great Roman orator. It would seem that Petrarch was also the first to appreciate the lyricism of Catullus, copies of whose poems were taken *from Flandria* (? - Auth.) at the end of the 13th century by a scribe from Verona named Francesco" ([33], pp.87-88).

Petrarch wrote: "As soon as I see a monastery I immediately turn there in the hope of finding something of Cicero's works". Petrarch will find many of Cicero's works later. As already noted, he discovered two speeches in Liege, which he quickly spread among the literators of his era. He claimed to have transcribed them himself from a monastery manuscript. "You will laugh if I tell you that in

Liege I had great difficulty in finding ink, and even that was more like saffron." The strange story of the search for Cicero's lost work "On Glory" belongs to about the same time. The existence of this manuscript was known from a letter to Atticus attributed to Cicero. Petrarch stated that he had supposedly discovered the manuscript, but had lent it to his old teacher Convenevole, who had "lost" it.

Petrarch allegedly discovered Cicero's letters in the library of the capitol in Verona, and before Petrarch, nobody knew of the existence of these works. For some reason Petrarch soon did not have the original; he produced a copy, distributing it to all those interested. This manuscript contained a letter to Atticus, to his brother Quintus, to Marcus Brutus, and several apocrypha.

The extent to which Petrarch had become accustomed to the imaginary world of antiquity can be seen in his manner of writing letters to the antique dead. "Francesco Petrarch greets Marcus Tullius Cicero. For a long time, I sought out your letters and at last found them where I least expected them. I read them eagerly. I heard your words,

your cries, I recognized your fickleness, Marcus. Until now I knew what a teacher you were to others, now I know what you were to yourself... ...In the mountainous region, on the right bank of the Adige, in the city of Verona, on June 16, of the year after the birth of Christ, which you did not know, 1345th."

Petrarch received several works of Cicero from the jurist Lapo di Castiglionchio, a passionate collector and gatherer of antique authors. From the same Lapo di Castiglionchio, the enthusiastic Petrarch also received fragments from the works of Quintilian, "On the Education of the Orator" in particular. Petrarch was absolutely convinced of the authenticity of this manuscript. The manuscript was sloppy and frayed, several books were missing, and those that survived had many gaps; in general, the manuscript looked very much like an ancient one, and Petrarch required nothing more; he immediately wrote an enthusiastic letter, appealing to the spirit of Quintilian. "In the mountain world, between the right slope of the Apennines and the right bank of the Arno, in my hometown,

where I was first able to meet you, on December 7 of the year of Christ, which your master (i.e. Domitian) preferred not to acknowledge but to pursue, 1350th." In a collection of Petrarch's letters, preserved in Florence, Lapo di Castiglionchio added beside these words, "You speak the truth, for I gave it to you at the time of your Roman journey, and no one had seen it before." Petrarch continues, "I want only one more thing: to see your creation in full, and wherever you are, I pray you, hide no more." And so, in answer to these entreaties, Quintilian's complete text was soon "discovered" by Poggio Bracciolini in the monastery of San Gallen in the winter of 1415-1416.

"Petrarch proved to be a born philologist. He was the first to study the works of the ancient Roman poets, comparing different folios and drawing on data from related historical sciences. In the second period of his work, Petrarch simultaneously laid the foundations of classical philology... It was Petrarch the philologist who destroyed the medieval legend of Virgil as the magician and *sorcerer*, *exposed the author of the Aeneid to a number of anachronisms*,

removed from Seneca several works attributed to him in the Middle Ages, and proved the apocryphal nature of the letters of Caesar and Nero, which in the middle 14th century was of considerable political importance, for the authority of these messages justified the claims of the Empire to Austria" ([33], pp. 88-89).

Thus we see that in Petrarch's time "ancient" forgeries were widespread already.

Petrarch's appeal to antiquity was a consequence of the poet's ideological conflict with his environment, and he creates for himself a legendary world of antiquity, radically antagonizing "antique civility" with feudal "barbarism". In a letter to Titus Livy (a letter to the past again) he pathetically exclaims: "Oh, why am I not destined to live in your time...

As I read you, I feel as if I were next to Cornelius, Scipio Africanus, Lelius, Fabius Maximus, Metellus, Brutus, Decius, Cato, Regulus, Torquatus... In sweet dreams I imagine myself living among these great men, and not

among the thieves and bandits who actually surround me... Among many others, with the greatest zeal I have given myself to the study of antiquity, for the time in which I lived, was always so much against my liking, that if my attachment to my loved ones did not prevent it, I always wished to be born in any other age and to forget this, constantly tried to live in other centuries with my soul.

Petrarch wrote a series of biographies, *On Famous Men*, almost all of whose characters are figures of republican Rome. In particular, this work contains biographies of Junius Brutus, Horace Cocles, Camille, Mailius Torquatus, Fabricius, Fabius Maximus, Cato the Elder, and Scipio the African. It has been suggested that he used the works of Titus Livy, Suetonius, Justin, Florus, and Caesar as his sources. But how well-founded is this? In fact, we do not know what sources Petrarch used or whether he used any. After all, he wrote novels. "My composition contains only that which has to do with virtues or vices, for, if I am not mistaken, the true task of the historian is to show what readers should follow or what they should

avoid." It is not his fault that these writings later came to be regarded as indisputable historical primary sources.

Petrarch argued that the ancient classics must be imitated so that "the new work resembles the archetype but is not identical with it".

Petrarch was a sincere teacher of Poggio Bracciolini, and the latter was his sincere pupil.

Petrarch named many "ancient" names, and his followers just had to find their works.

Particular attention should be paid to Petrarch's activities around his own epistolary legacy. He left three collections of letters, which he himself edited, with many letters destroyed as unwanted witnesses. In his Latin correspondence, he obscured reality, introduced ancient nicknames and names - Socrates, Lelius, Olympius, Simonides, etc. - and Latinized his letters so that they took on the vivid character of antiquity as it was understood at the time. Even as he recounted the events of the present day, he disguised them under the garb of antiquity. These

letters circulated throughout Europe, to London, Paris, and Prague, not to mention Italy, and created that antique flavor that soon brought up Poggio Bracciolini.

Conclusions

What conclusions can be drawn from all this?

We have already noted the apparent legendary and amplified nature of Petrarch's biography, quite natural for the generally recognized founder and mastermind of a powerful ideological movement. But, even distancing ourselves from this, we can clearly discern in his biography the general spirit of the era and immediately discover the many possibilities of falsification.

Without wishing to question Petrarch's personal conscientiousness, we cannot yet fail to note his almost morbid fascination, which clearly does not permit a critical appraisal of the "educated and trustworthy men" who deliver him (let us recall, not for free) "ancient" writings.

Nor should we ignore the real possibility that some of Petrarch's works, written by him bona fide in imitation of the classics, might later be mistaken for copies of truly "ancient" works. We have already noted what is the objective reliability of his biographical series of heroes of republican Rome.

Naturally, we cannot claim that all Renaissance humanists were frauds and forgers. For the most part, they were just enthusiastic people who were not critical enough of the manuscripts that fell into their hands.

But still, of course, they had a certain critical sense, they knew about the possibility of forgeries (not without reason Petrarch is looking for "trustworthy" people), so it becomes incomprehensible why only a very few forgeries were exposed.

The answer is very simple. One has to think that there were many forgeries, as the market demanded, but most of them were made so ineptly that the forgery was exposed by the first purchaser of the manuscript. Only the more

skillful forgeries weren't exposed immediately and had time to become known. The most skillful forgeries, however, which fully corresponded to the legend already unified from the original chaos, were recognized as genuine works of antiquity.

This selection process also explains the certain consistency of the extant "ancient sources": manuscripts that contradicted the already established legend were declared forgeries and were destroyed as such. For this process to begin, it was enough to recognize one or two manuscripts as true, and on what grounds Petrarch (or his predecessors and teachers) did this, we do not know, and in view of all that is known about Petrarch, it is very doubtful that these grounds were very reliable.

By the way, since the documents were rejected as false on the grounds that they contradicted the "true" documents, it is possible that the actual true sources, which presented us with the events of ancient history in a very different way, could have been discarded (and lost).

Where did all this activity begin? Until there were humanists like Petrarch, the ancient Romans were of no use to anyone and there was no profit in forging them. Collectors of manuscripts, around which forgeries had already begun to hover, could not have appeared until there were manuscripts. Does this mean that some stock of truly ancient manuscripts must have existed from the beginning? Maybe yes, maybe not. We must not forget that the vast majority of extant manuscripts from the Middle Ages are anonymous. As Academician M.I. Sukhomlinov notes (regarding Old Russian manuscripts):

"For the most part the names of the writers disappeared with them, and sometimes were not known even during their lifetime. This circumstance cannot be called a mere coincidence: it reveals a feature of Old Russian scholarship. In the constant retention of his name in obscurity one sees a conviction, a kind of beginning, which put the thought revealed in the work, incomparably higher than the personality of the author... Not only

authors, but scribes themselves did not consider it necessary to give their names" (see [71], p. 42).

As a result, by the time of Petrarch a decent stock of anonymous works had already accumulated, which he could actually find in various places and, unsatisfied with their anonymity, attribute them to some ancient author known to him from chaotic legends and by the name only. Of course, we speak here of Petrarch only as an example; this also applies to all the collectors from his and later times.

It was enough for a few such manuscripts (and enough enthusiastic collectors of them) to appear, and a wide road was opened to deliberate falsifications as well.

Causes of apocrypha before and after the invention of book printing

Judging from the example of Poggio Bracciolini, the main driving force behind the apocryphing of the ancient classics in the pre-printing era was the thirst for profit. This

reason, of course, remained even after the appearance of printed books.

It should be noted here that the tradition of the handwritten book persisted very long after the invention of printing.

"Remarkable evidence of the case of the preponderance of manuscripts over printed scientific books in a scientific library in the second half of the 16th century belongs to the English mathematician, alchemist, and astrologer John Dee (1527-1608); he claimed that among the 4000 books in his library, only 1000 were printed works" ([100], p. 56).

In Italy, along with the already well-developed book printing, there was a powerful current of the manuscript tradition of bibliophilic nature: "sumptuous Greek codices with texts of ancient authors were created at the request of humanists and collector-patrons. Such codices were copied not only by the Greeks but also by the Italians themselves. Thus, for example, in the first half of the 16th

century, Giovanni Bernardo Regasola, nicknamed Feliciano, a teacher of Greek and Latin in Venice, created exquisite manuscripts containing texts of the Greek physicians" ([100], p. 109).

Who knows how many such copies were subsequently attributed by dodgy resellers and gullible scholars into, say, the 8th century? On the territory of the former Byzantine Empire there were no Greek printing houses for a very long time, "and because of the absence of printing houses in Greece the book was copied by hand - in monasteries, in churches, in schools, in large cities, and in the remotest corners" ([100], p. 106). "The printed Greek books brought in from Italy did not meet the existing need for books even in the slightest, and they did not reach the remote corners of Greece at all" ([100], p. 110).

Numerous manuscript copies, which thus arose as an effect of the printed editions, could be declared "ancient" upon their discovery.

It would be interesting to investigate obvious typos in known editions of classical and religious books to see if these typos also repeat in "ancient" manuscripts thought to be earlier originals.

In the early period of printing, other factors besides profit may have played a significant role. For example, a young, fledgling author, not yet having a high-profile name, has considerable difficulty in publishing his works. Often the only solution for him is to put on a manuscript some ancient name that is already well known and guarantees the spread of the book in the reading environment. In this case, the author himself acts as a translator, as the discoverer of the "ancient text," thereby gaining initial fame.

However, something similar happened in the pre-printing period as well. For example, it is well known that works attributed to Chrysostom didn't always really belong to him. M.I. Sukhomlinov explains that the "author's egoism, choosing various ways of fame, was stopping on Chrysostom's name as on the most reliable guarantee of

the success of the work. That is why at different times many of the writing Greeks exhibited the name of their venerable compatriot on their own works, which were far from perfect" (see [71], p. 43).

Both in the pre- and post-printing era the author of an ideologically "dangerous" book (say, an anticlerical book) could cover himself with the ancient name like a shield, thus depriving himself of glory, but being satisfied with the possibility to spread his views. This kind of mimicry could also be multi-layered.

For example, we know Celsus, an extremely anti-Christian writer of the II century. His works have not reached us, and his views are known only from the writings of Origen, who refuted him. It is noteworthy that Origen, quoting Celsus at length and accurately presenting his views, does not refute them in any way, limiting himself to rude insults and statements like "it is impossible because it contradicts the Holy Scripture". Isn't Origen here a mere mask of an anticlerical author who decided to present his views in this form? Origen's citation of Celsus is so detailed

that modern scholars have been able to "reconstruct" from these citations, in essence, the entire work of Celsus (see for example [111], p. 104).

And isn't the famous saying of Tertullian: "I believe it because it is absurd" also a subtle mockery from the anticlerical apocryphist author?

§ 4. Overview of the origins of the major works of the Antiquity

In light of all of the above, it becomes necessary to take a closer look at the history of the discovery and publication of ancient works.

Works of Plato

Everybody knows the name PLATO, but very few, except the specialists, know, that even "*at the beginning of the XV century humanists did not know Plato at all*", but, following the words of Cicero, usually with ardor rebelled against every doubt in the sublimity of his philosophy" ([88], p. 147). Humanists did not know Plato either in the originals or in translations. The first translation of several dialogues of Plato was given by Bruni in 1421, but the originals he used have not come down to us (so it makes sense to ask: did these "originals" really exist?).

Plato became widely known only after the Florentine philosopher Marcello Ficino brought the Latin manuscript of "the Dialogues" to the publisher Venetus in 1482,

declaring it his translation from a Greek manuscript. After Ficino's manuscript was published, readers immediately noted **a great number of anachronisms in it**. The second edition of Ficino's "translation" was published in Florence in 1491, and a third, corrected from anachronisms as much as possible, in Venice in 1517.

Ficino never presented the Greek manuscripts until his death; neither did his heirs find them; **the manuscripts disappeared without a trace** (like the Bruni's manuscripts).

It wasn't until 30 years after the first edition of Plato that the Venetian Cretan named Marcus Masurus submitted a Greek text of Plato's works in 1512. This text was immediately printed in 1513, and then with constant corrections, it was reprinted many times throughout the 16th century.

The Greek text of Masurus is characterized by such a pronounced variety of styles that to date **there is not a single dialogue considered authentic by all specialists on**

Plato. Of the 38 dialogues, 9 are recognized by all scholars to be forgeries. One of Plato's earliest and most respected scholars, Asth, acknowledged 14 dialogues only. Other scholars (Zocher, Schaarschmidt, Iberweg), while acknowledging dialogues rejected by Asth, deny others. The record seems to be held by Schaarschmidt, who found only 9 dialogues credible, among them those rejected by Asth and Zocher (see details in [3], pp. 127-128).

However, no one seems to have thought of the most natural explanation: for the speed of the deed, Masurus commissioned not one but several persons to translate the Latin text of Ficino into Greek.

It is significant that most of the references to Plato's name in the "ancient" Greek authors became known after the appearance of Ficino's translations.

Also noteworthy is the fact that one of the main followers and successors of Plato was the Alexandrian philosopher PLOTINUS, and - later, during the Renaissance - the Greek Byzantine philosopher PLETHON,

who spread his ideas in Europe. Can the phonetic similarity of the names Plato - Plotinus - Plethon be accidental?

We will return to Plethon in Ch. 18.

Works of Cicero

The situation is similar for the Latin classics.

Consider, for example, the treatises of CICERO, which have come down to us in two manuscript versions, "incomplete" and "complete" (see [46], pp. 387-388). We are told that with the decline of antique culture, Cicero's treatises lose popularity, due to which, for example, the treatises "On the Orator" and "Oratorius" survived only in a single manuscript with many lost sheets. Here is how the notes in [46] describe the history of Cicero's editions:

"When the streak of the "dark ages" of the early Middle Ages passes and the surviving monuments of ancient literature begin to be copied through European monasteries again, this defective manuscript of the treatises "On Orator" and "Oratorius" becomes the source

of a whole family of folios; all of them have in common the feature of omissions (sometimes very large, half a book or more) in places where sheets were lost in the archetype. This is an "incomplete version"; its archetype died long ago, but its text can be partially reconstructed from the oldest and best copies - "the Auranchan copy", "the Harleian copy", "the Erlangen copy" (these copies allegedly belong to the IX-X centuries A.D. - Author).

In the 14th and early 15th centuries, the Renaissance dramatically revived interest in Cicero's rhetorical treatises. The surviving manuscripts of "On the Orator" and "Oratorius" are being rewritten more and more frequently, and the annoyance at their incompleteness is bursting through more and more. It was as far as around 1420 that Professor Gasparino Barzizza of Milano, who was a leading expert on Ciceronian rhetoric at the time, embarked on a perilous task: he set out to fill in the gaps in the "incomplete version" with his own additions for coherence. His work was nearly complete when *a miracle occurred*: in the remote Italian town of Lodi a derelict

manuscript was found with the complete text of all rhetorical works of Cicero - "The Old Rhetoric" ("Rhetoric to Herennius"), "New Rhetoric" ("On Finding"), "On Orator", "Brutus" (completely unknown previously) and "Oratorius". Barzizza and his students pounce on the new find, struggle at deciphering its ancient (probably 13th century) script, and finally make a legible copy. Copies are made of this copy, and together they constitute a "complete version" of Cicero's text; at its head are the Florentine copy of Magliabecchi, the Vatican Ottobonian copy (the only one that includes all three treatises in a row), and the Palatine, all three dating from 1422 to 1425. Meanwhile, something irreparable happens: the archetype of this version, the Lodi manuscript, is abandoned, no one wants to struggle with its difficult text, it is sent back to Lodi because it is not needed, and there *it disappear without a trace*: since 1428 nothing is known about its fate. European philologists are still lamenting this loss to this day" ([46], pp. 387-388).

That is how the manuscripts of Marcus Tullius Cicero, a famous Roman orator, and politician, were "found"! One can only congratulate Professor Barzizza and his students on this successful operation. "Manuscripts multiplied, along with "incomplete" and "complete" manuscripts, mixed manuscripts appeared, amending one manuscript for the other. With the invention of printing manuscripts were replaced by printed editions: around 1465 the first printed edition of the treatise "On the Orator" appeared in Subiaco; in 1469 the first printed edition of all three treatises together appeared in Rome. For several centuries the manuscripts of the 'full version' as the most coherent and convenient... were taken as the basis for these editions" ([46], p. 388).

The story of the "discovery" of Cicero's manuscript "On the State" is also instructive. It turns out, until the early 19th century this treatise was known only by references in the works of other authors and by isolated quotations that were found in other writers.

"During the Renaissance, connoisseurs, and admirers of antiquity, beginning with Petrarch, sought out this work of Cicero in all the book depositories of Europe and went for this purpose even to Poland, but for long all these attempts remained fruitless. Only in the early 19th century (! - Auth.), the scholar Cardinal Angelo Mai, prefect of the Vatican Library, found a palimpsest (a manuscript on parchment whose original text had been erased and a new one was written). This palimpsest contained much of the first and second books of the treatise, as well as passages from the third, fourth, and fifth books; the palimpsest did not preserve a single passage of the sixth. In 1822 May published the manuscript, incorporating the fragments and quotations cited by the ancient authors, and furnishing the edition with his commentaries..." ([81], p. 159).

Book "Life of the Twelve Caesars" by Suetonius

This book enjoyed great popularity in the Middle Ages, but its surviving copies "ultimately ascend to the only ancient manuscript that survived the "dark ages" of the

barbarian invasions and was in the possession of the court academy of Charlemagne. Einhardt was acquainted with Suetonius from this manuscript when he wrote his "Life of Charlemagne" around 818 A.D., carefully reproducing Suetonius' biographical schemes (What if "Suetonius" is just another nickname for Einhardt? – Author.). This manuscript was then kept in the famous Abbey of St. Boniface in Fulda, and copies were made of it... Neither the Fulda manuscript nor the first copies of it have come down to us...". ([59], p. 281).

It turns out that the oldest and best copy of this book is the one attributed by historians to the 9th century and called "the Memmian Codex" after the French diplomat who owned it in the 16th century. All other copies are dated not earlier than XI century A.D. (see [59], p. 281).

The first printed editions of Suetonius are thought to be the two Roman editions of 1470 and the Venetian of 1471. "These were based on late, imperfect manuscripts..." ([59], p. 281).

The excerpts of Suetonius' work "On Famous Men" also appeared very late. "...A large fragment has survived, covering the entire book "On Grammaticics and Rhetoricians," with the exception of the end. This fragment was in the 9th century compendium from the Hersfeld monastery in Germany (the compendium also included Germania, Agricola, and Tacitus' "Dialogue on Orators", followed by a work by Suetonius, and the manuscript stopped there). *This manuscript was discovered in Germany by Poggio Bracciolini in 1425 and brought to Italy by Enoch of Asculano around 1458. The Hersfeld manuscript did not survive* (only a few sheets of Tacitus' part have survived), but about 20 copies of it, made in Italy in the 15th century, remain; they are used to establish the text of 'On Grammaticics and Rhetoricians'..." ([59], p. 337). A reminder (see § 1) that the so-called "minor" works of Tacitus mentioned here differ greatly in style from his "major" works ("History" and "Annales"). *Early on, in the 16th century, this was causing doubts about their authenticity* (see [48], vol. 2, pp. 217-218).

All other excerpts from Suetonius' books appear as quotations in the works of other authors.

The attitude of most historians to the information reported by Suetonius is negative. He is accused of "misunderstanding history", lack of critical flair, use of knowingly false and tendentious sources, tendency to retell completely implausible anecdotes and songs, etc., etc. (see [59], p. 263).

"Unfortunately, according to the common custom of ancient historians, Suetonius avoids direct references to sources. Nevertheless, in the references he mentions more than thirty authors, of whom some (Actorius, Nazon, Julius Marat, Julius Saturninus, Aquilius Niger) nobody else mentions" ([59], p. 277). Therefore, it is impossible to verify the reliability of these references, which may have been intentional. However, once these "new names" had been spoken, seekers like Poggio Bracciolini could already rightfully "seek" and, of course, "find" more and more "reliable copies of previously unknown writers".

Curiously enough, according to Suetonius (as well as Dio Cassius), the earthquake-stricken Pompeia was restored by Emperor Titus and still existed during Hadrian and Antoninus.

Incidentally, the restored Pompeii is also marked on the so-called "Peitinger's parchment scroll", made up of pieces of parchment glued together and published in Venice in 1591. This scroll was "found" only a hundred years earlier by Conrad Zeltner around 1490 (see [2], p. 315).

The "History" of Titus Livy

We've already mentioned TITUS LIVY in § 1. It is asserted, that he was allegedly born in 59 B.C. and used 75 (!) books, written in the previous generation by Valerius Antiatius, whose name according to Morozov (see [5], p. 259) means "Crested Strongman" (and a name of Livy himself is "Honourable Libyan"). These books, we are told, then disappeared without a trace, except for a few quotations in the works of later authors.

"Would it be worth the trouble if I were to write a history of the Roman people from the foundation of the capital? This I do not know well, and even if I did, I would not dare to say it. The fact is that this enterprise, as I see it, is both old and tried by many, with new writers constantly appearing and thinking: either to bring something new on the factual side or to surpass the harsh antiquity by the art of presentation. But, however that may be, it will still be a pleasure to me, as best I can, to serve to perpetuate the deeds of the first people on earth. And if my name in such a crowd of writers remains in the shadow, I shall console myself with the glory and greatness of my rivals" (quoted from [5], pp. 260-261).

We are assured, that in the I century B.C. the "Honorable Libyan" wrote in such florid style 144 (!) books on Roman history "since the foundation of the capital". Only 35 books have come down to us, divided into three groups with special prefaces and **differing quite much from each other.**

The first 10 books (Decade I) contain a history of Rome from foundation until 410 BCE (i.e., until 292 BCE, according to the chronology of Scaliger, who established this date in the 16th century). This decade is completely disconnected from the others and does not describe at all the visions and wonders that the other decades are teeming with. Decade II (books 11-20) is considered lost, and the further count begins with book 21 and reaches book 40. These are decades III and IV, containing the history of Rome from -217 to -176.

"These (30 books) were the only included in the first edition of Titus Livy about 1489, printed at Rome from a lost manuscript of an origin unknown to me. Then a manuscript was "discovered" in Hesse, at Lorsch, in the Benedictine monastery, containing five more books (41-45), considered a continuation of Decade IV and containing "the history of the Romans from -176 to -165," according to the very same chronology of Scaliger and Petavius. This manuscript is now in the Vienna State

Library. There are no other manuscripts of the latter books" ([5], pp. 265-266).

We shall discuss this most important source for the history of ancient Rome again and again, but for now, we shall only note that Poggio's involvement with this find is at least alarming (just as alarming as Poggio's involvement in Suetonius' find is).

Vitruvius' book "On Architecture"

In 1497 the book "On Architecture" by MARCUS VITROVIUS POLLION, whose name in Morozov's translation (see [4], p. 652) means "The deceased glassworker-hallowmaker", was discovered in the Monte Cassino monastery. The style of the book is so peculiar that researchers of his book have concluded that **the author either did not know classical Latin well or was not always sure what he's writing**. Vitruvius' work consists of seven large books and passages of nine, dealing not only with architecture alone but also with hydraulics, practical mechanics, and gnomonics, with mention of the inventors

of sundials and clepsydras, etc. There is also information on astronomy.

Vitruvius' book opens with the following dedication (quoted from [4], pp. 623-624):

"When I think, august sovereign, that by the power of Your mind You have become the possessor of the universe, that all the nations of the world, seeing your invincible courage conquering your enemies and covering with glory those who are under your power and giving you general adulation, and that the Roman people and the Senate hope to establish the silence - which they enjoy by the wisdom of Your rule alone - only by the great wisdom of Your ruling, I am left in indecision, may I offer You this my work on architecture?

But, imagining the great breadth of Your mind, I hope that my rank - which has given me some fame in the time of my sovereign, Your parent - will preserve me the same favor with you..."

Not to mention the author's style, the reference to the sovereign parent was very confusing to all scholars, who attributed the author to the age of Octavian Augustus, who, according to all historians, was not a royal son.

This is not the only oddity in terms of traditional history contained in Vitruvius' book. For example, in the astronomical section of this book, the periods of heliocentric (!) revolutions of the planets are indicated with incredible accuracy. It turns out that the architect Vitruvius, who lived in the I century A.D., knew the heliocentric rotation times of the planets better than **Copernicus** and, say, in the period of Saturn he made a mistake only of 0,00007 of the true (established by modern science) period (the inaccuracy of Mars is 0,006, and for Jupiter - 0,003). All this was calculated 1500 years before Copernicus, although **the concept of the heliocentric period is only possible within the framework of the Copernican system.**

It sounds unbelievably anachronistic to hear Vitruvius (at the beginning of our era!) say that musicians marked

diheses and semitones on stringed instruments, while historians of music tell us that all these concepts and notations came into use only after the Middle Ages.

In [4] (pp. 622-662) all the paradoxes of Vitruvius' book are explained in detail, and it is shown, that it is compiled from many sources of late origin, not earlier than the epoch of Lorenzo de Medici (1449-1492). Its author lived at the same time as Copernicus and, compiling the astronomical section of his book, he used the latest computational data that was unknown to Copernicus, who lived far away.

Who the true author of Vitruvius' work was, can only be guessed. Here the gigantic figure of Leonardo da Vinci, not only a magnificent artist but also an encyclopedically educated engineer and architect (he built a number of buildings in Milano and left an immeasurable number of designs and drawings) comes involuntarily to mind. In the year of the release of the book "On Architecture" by Vitruvius Pollion, Leonardo was 45 years old and lived in Italy. Copernicus and Leonardo were almost

contemporaries; with the scattered scientists of the time, Copernicus may not have had the materials to calculate the periods of the planets as precisely as Leonardo did in Milano in 1497, whose book, as alien to Copernicus in its subject, may have remained unread. The identification of Vitruvius with Leonardo explains in particular the poor Latin of Vitruvius since all of Leonardo's biographers unanimously note that Leonardo's knowledge of Latin was surprisingly poor. However, it is possible that the author of Vitruvius was not Leonardo. There is little doubt, however, that he belonged to Leonardo's entourage.

Greek Historians

In Greek literature, the most authoritative writers-historians are considered to be HERODOTUS, THUCYDIDES, and PAUSANIAS. Of Herodotus and Thucydides we shall speak in detail in its own place, but now we shall consider the writings of Pausanias.

To Pausanias, whose name according to Morozov (see [5], p. 408) means "The Satisfaction of Longing", belongs

"Descriptions of Hellas, or Travels in Greece" in 10 books, dated by the II century B.C. I. Schubart characterizes the importance of Pausanias' books as follows:

"There is no ancient writer to whom so much as to Pausanias we owe our knowledge of ancient Greece, its religious life and art. It may be said without hesitation that *without him, entire countries of Greece would be totally unknown to us*. Some religious customs and forms of belief have been handed down by him alone, and without him, there would hardly have been a history of Greek art" (see [5], p. 408).

Pausanias is invisibly present in all modern writings on classical Hellas. It is a guidebook to ancient Greece. The author has read everything we now find in classical literature, and he has summarized or directly cited almost all the readings of the classical authors (and added even more of its own). Pausanias quotes about 160 "ancient" authors (notably Aristophanes, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, etc.), and his quotes match their printed editions.

Draws attention the fact that the division (according to Pausanias) of Greece into Attica, Corinthia, Laconica, Messenia, Ilida, Achaea, Arcadia, Boeotia, and Thekida totally coincides with the division of Greece during the feudal Latin states of the 13th century. Absolutely nothing is known about the life of Pausanias. At first, historians believed Pausanias completely, but as archaeology developed and real archaeological material accumulated, more and more doubts about Pausanias' credibility began to arise.

At the end of the 19th century, the archaeologist A. Kalkman published a book entitled "Pausanias – a guidebook" in which he compared his descriptions in detail with those of other authors and, finding a great many contradictions and oddities, summarized his study in the following words:

"Pausanias reveals neither talent nor honest work. He, like the present guides to foreigners, *was an ignoramus of the worst kind...* Oral traditions, which were his chief guides, could not be of genuine dignity, and on this thin ground

rests a work that in classical archaeology should be a book of books. Let us rejoice at this discovery and at the fact that the science of the monuments of ancient Greece is not based on the mere whim and arbitrariness of some late, hearsay-working Syrian or Minor Asian of very doubtful talent, but falls back to an earlier century when it was still collected and researched with a direct desire to serve the truth" (see [5], p. 410).

What, in fact, does it mean to accuse an ancient author (like Pausanias or Suetonius) of "ignorance"? Only that information reported in his book is at variance with the ideas about antiquity that have been developed by that moment. Therefore such accusations are a strong argument for apocryphality. In order to find the true time when the book was written, one must find the point in the Renaissance when the information about antiquity contained in the book was in harmony with the opinions of the epoch.

In ([5], pp. 408-426) where Pausanias' book is parsed in detail, it is shown that **Pausanias is a very late author**,

very ineptly concealing the time of the book, compiled most likely after the Renaissance.

Other Authors

We shall only briefly enumerate the less significant authors (without much order or completeness), adding at the same time some later authors.

The works of JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS (The Jewish War, Jewish Antiquities, Life, Against Appio) were originally published in 1470 in Latin (a revised edition in 1524) and only later in 1544 in Greek (supposedly written by Flavius himself). It is noteworthy that there is a Latin version of the first seven books of the Jewish War, which differs greatly from the canonical version (and is considered its "transposition"). It was published in 1510 but traditionally dates back almost to the IVth century. The sixth book of the Jewish War is known in the Syriac translation ("transposition"?) as the Fifth Book of the Maccabees. The apocryphal "Fourth Book of Maccabees" was also attributed to Flavius (see [162], vol. 15, pp. 302-311). The

strange contradictions in Flavius' writings have long raised doubts about their authenticity. According to Morozov (see [58], pp. 281-293), a number of Flavius' statements (for example, his statement about the monogamy of the Jews, established only in 1030) as well as the general style of his works, unequivocally indicate their medieval origin.

The works of EPIPHANIAS OF SALAMIS (for example, his Latin book "On Weights and Measures") were picked up as late as the 17th century A.D., shortly before their publication in 1622 in Paris (see [2], p. 324).

Works attributed to SULPICIUS SEVERUS (e.g., his Sacred History), who supposedly died in A.D. 429, were not picked up until 1668 (see [2], p. 329).

The writings attributed to OROSIUS, who supposedly died in the 5th century A.D., were picked up and published as late as 1471 A.D. in Augsburg (see [2], p. 330).

The writer APPIAN (to whom, in particular, the History of Rome is attributed) is thought to have died in Alexandria under Antoninus Pius, and the works attributed

to him were not picked up and published until 1551-1557 A.D. in Paris (see [2], p. 334).

ORIGEN is considered to have died in Alexandria in A.D. 254, and the works attributed to him first began to be picked up in the 17th century A.D.(see [2], p. 335).

ATHANASIUS THE GREAT (Athanasius of Alexandria) is thought to have died in 373 A.D., and the writings attributed to him were not found by Montfaucon until the 17th century and published in Paris in 1698 (see [2], p. 336).

AUGUSTIN is thought to have died in A.D. 430, and the writings attributed to him were not picked up until the 17th century A.D. and published in Paris in 1689-1700 (see [2], p. 339).

TERTULLIAN died allegedly during Caracalla, and the works attributed to him were not picked up and published in Paris until 1616 A.D. (see[2], p. 338). Incidentally, Tertullian reports (which Mucius Felix also ironically confirms) that the II century A.D. pagans accused

Christians of worshipping a donkey head. Curiously, in 1856, shortly after the Obler's 1853 publication of Tertullian's writings containing this report, a drawing (now preserved in the Kircher Museum in Rome) depicting donkey-worshipping Christians was found in the "Palace of the Caesars". For some reason, this drawing remained undiscovered until information about donkey head worship was published.

Manuscript excerpts from the "City Chronicle" by ANTHIMES (devoted to the history of Athens) were found in the Anargyrian monastery of Athens as late as 1800 (see [5], p. 146).

The works of Gnostic VALENTIN THE PHILOSOPHER, who died ostensibly in 160 A.D., are known only in the transposition of IRINEUS, bishop of Lyon, who seemingly died in 202 A.D., and the compositions of Irineas himself are known only in the edition of Erasmus of Rotterdam, published in 1526. Where Erasmus took them from, is absolutely unknown.

The origin of the Hebrew manuscripts is also shrouded in obscurity.

Although the rabbis detail the creation of the Talmud in the I to V centuries A.D., in fact, the earliest complete manuscript of the so-called Babylonian Talmud dates from the 14th century (a thousand years later!). The earliest manuscripts of individual Talmudic treatises date back to 1112 (kept in Leningrad) and to 1184 (kept in the Hamburg Library). There is, however, the opinion that a somewhat earlier manuscript of the tractate Pesahim is kept in Cambridge (see [162], vol. 14, p. 718).

It is believed that the "father of Talmudic Judaism" AKIBA BEN-JOSEPH, who allegedly lived in the I-II century A.D., composed the "Book of Akiba on the Adornment of Letters", in which he explains the meaning and significance of the graphic elements of Hebrew letters. But even the most orthodox Jewish Encyclopedia has to acknowledge that "the Book itself gives not the slightest indication as to when it was compiled" ([162], vol. 1, p. 634), and reports that its first edition appeared in Mantua only in 1613.

In the Middle Ages, the Book of Eldad-Hanani, supposedly written by the 9th century Jewish traveler, was full of fantastical fabrications. Most readers read this book with complete confidence. And when any of the skeptics expressed doubts, he was told that the famous Kairok scholars made an inquiry to Tzemach, the rector of the Boer Academy as early as 890 A.D., whether this book should be trusted, and the rector replied that its author "can be relied upon" (see [2], p. 261). Of course, after such an answer, to express doubts about the authenticity of this book and whether it belongs to the 9th century is impolite, to say the least.

Clerical Stories

It would seem that works of an ecclesiastical nature should be more reliably traceable back into centuries. But this is just as true of them as it is of secular works.

The "Ecclesiastical History" of SOCRATES SCHOLASTICUS, covering the period from Constantine I to Theodosius Jr. (i.e. from about 325 to 425 A.D.), was not

discovered in a Latin manuscript until the early 16th century, and then new publishers discovered its Greek "original" as well. Where were all these manuscripts during the course of 1200 years - no one knows (see [I], p. 72). In accordance with the standard practice of the time that we've already noted, after the publication of Scholasticus' work, the manuscript of his work disappeared, and no one ever saw it again.

The first reliable information about the "Ecclesiastical History" of EUSEBIUS PAMPHILUS, whose name according to Morozov means "Pious Omnipotent" (see [T], p. 870), we have (and that not in Greek, but in Latin) only from the first half of the XVI century, and the style of his books corresponds to this late time. The Greek text was first published in 1544 in Paris. Another Latin edition, in a new translation by Christopherson and with notes by Suffrid Pierre, was published in 1612. This edition was translated into German, Dutch, English, and French. The Valesius edition, published in Cambridge in 1720, is now considered the most authoritative.

Eusebius is one of the major primary sources not only on the history of Christianity in the first three centuries CE, but also on the political and dynastic history of the time, although his writings have been severely criticized many times and are now generally regarded as unreliable. For example, the 19th century German historian J. Burckhardt, calling Eusebius "the first from beginning to end unscrupulous historiographer of antiquity," wrote: "After the numerous distortions, concealments, and fabrications which are found in him, *he has no right to play a role of a positive source*. To this is also added the deliberate vagueness of expressions, the deliberate pompousness, the innumerable ambiguities of this writer..." (see [36], p. 259).

The Soviet historian J.A. Lenzman repeats the same opinion: "...it must be remembered that Eusebius often did not stop before clear falsification of sources" [78], p. 42).

Again we meet the accusation of the ancient author of bad faith and ignorance.

Virtually nothing is known about the life of Eusebius. Socrates Scholasticus (whose book, we recall, was discovered at the same time as Eusebius' book) reports that the life of Eusebius was described by ACACIUS, his disciple and successor on the bishop's throne. However, this biography "did not survive," and there are only brief accounts of it scattered in various very late authors,

Eusebius is credited with a colossal number of very variegated books: "Lovetruthian" (Philalith), "The Gospel Preparation" in fifteen books, "The Gospel Proof" in ten books, the already mentioned "Clerical History" in ten books, "On the Palestinian Christian Martyrs," "The Epistle to the flock of Caesarea." "A Book on the Names of the Places Mentioned in Holy Writ," "A Praise of Constantine the Great," "Two Books against Markellus, Bishop of Ancyra," "Ecclesiastical Theology" in three books, "Life of Constantine the Great" in four books, etc.

Along with quite orthodox books, Eusebius allegedly wrote books that "led believers into temptation" and therefore remained unpublished: three books "On the

supposed disagreement of the Gospels", manuscripts of which are preserved in Sicily, and four books of the "Prophetic eclogues of the Old Testament about Christ", manuscripts of which are preserved in the Vienna Imperial Library in Basel, etc.

The question is: can we trust the reports that all these various works belong to the same author?

In [7] (pp. 870-903) arguments for the very late origin of all books of Eusebius are presented. We will not repeat all these arguments here but will point only to the confusion of Eusebius on the matter of year count.

It is believed (see below § 5, ch. 6) that C.E., the "Christian Era" was established by Dionysius the Minor as late as the sixth century and came into use even later. But then how can we explain the widespread use of this era by Eusebius (see, for example, the end of the seventh book of his "chronicle", which directly refers to the year 305 "from the birth of our savior")?

In Chapter XIII of this book, Eusebius cites texts of letters exchanged between Jesus Christ and King Abhar of Aedes, who "suffered from a terrible and incurable disease" and had asked Jesus to heal him. Eusebius goes on to tell how Thaddeus, a disciple of Christ sent "at the Savior's word" healed Abhar and performed many other miracles.

However, this remarkable episode is now completely excluded from the "sacred history" by both churchmen and secular scholars. The fact is that Eusebius dates it to 340! (We ask the reader to keep this date in mind, it will come in handy for us in Ch. 15).

It has been argued that the Christian Eusebius is using the pagan "Seleucid era" here for some reason, but this also gives an error of 25 years. To make ends meet, it has been suggested that Eusebius dates Christ's correspondence with Abhar by the fantastic "era of Edessa," not recorded anywhere else. However, realizing the weakness of these considerations, most scholars prefer to simply ignore this episode "to avoid temptation".

It is also interesting to notice that the Greek text of the Chronicle exists in excerpts only, and its complete Latin text is considered a translation by Bl. HIERONYMUS, whose other works were picked up as late as the 18th century and printed in Verona in 1734-1742 (see [2], p. 328).

Conclusion

There is not a single "ancient" work whose origins can be reliably traced back to the beginning of the book printing era.

Moreover, the origin of the most authoritative works (say, Plato) is more than doubtful, and some of them are clearly forgeries (Vitruvius).

So maybe Morozov is indeed right, and the so-called "ancient" literature is all fake? (Incidentally, contrary to popular opinion, it is not so large: reprinted in modern type, it would fit into a medium-sized bookcase or two.)

In the following paragraphs, we will try to answer this question.

§ 5. On the Possibility of the Ancient Literature in General and Its Individual Genres in Particular

In this paragraph, we will discuss (following Morozov rather accurately) whether ancient literature in its known form could have developed based on the material culture of antiquity and whether it could reach us "through the thickness of time."

The necessity of paper for the developing literacy

To prepare a single sheet of parchment, it is necessary:

- 1) to rip the skin off from a young calf, no older than 6 weeks old, or from a young lamb;
- 2) to soak it in running water for up to 6 days;
- 3) to peel off the fur with a special scraper;
- 4) to loosen the wool by skinning in a damp pit and ashing with lime for 12 to 20 days;
- 5) to skin the loosened wool;
- 6) to leaven the bare skin in oat or wheat bran to remove excess lime from it;

- 7) to scour the skin with vegetable tanning extracts, so that after drying it would become soft;
- 8) to smooth out roughnesses by rubbing egg white or lead white in the parchment, or by rubbing the skin with a pumice stone, previously sprinkled with chalk (though it is believed that the second method came into use only since the 13th century).

This is the preparation of every sheet of parchment.

It was placing parchment on the level of precious objects, a position which remained until the invention of rag-paper on the eve of the Renaissance (and this is absolutely not a pure coincidence) (see e.g., [13], p. 50).

So how, with such value and rarity of writing material, fine literature could have developed? Even developing basic literacy requires constant and years of exercise (writing, dictation, etc.), impossible on parchment (and, let us add, on papyrus, which was only slightly cheaper). We are told that for this purpose they used cheap, reusable, watered-down slate boards. But where and how were the teacher's instructions and his corrections of mistakes

recorded? To keep the corrections in memory, dictation and exercise texts must be kept for a certain time with going back to them constantly to reinforce the skill. It is true that there are almost "no-writing" schools in history (for example, the 19th century Russian village schools), but also known how literate its pupils were when they left it.

To achieve sufficient literacy and the ability to easily express one's thoughts on paper, one must not only write countless dictations controlled by a teacher using standard copy-books but also read a huge number of books written in standard spelling. If a student does not read a lot of books, no matter how conscientiously he or she learns in class, he or she will remain an illiterate person and, at any rate, will never be a writer with a confident command of language. This clearly shows in the extreme situation of learning a foreign language. ***Without practicing with standard texts, it is impossible to learn to write correctly.*** memorizing only the rules does not guarantee against mistakes.

But could manuscripts in the prepress period have been written according to unified orthographic rules? It is enough to put the question out for the negative answer to become obvious. Even now, the uniform orthography of books is achieved only after a lot of set reviews by proofreaders, destroying all the author's (and not only the author's) orthographic originality. However, when there were no orthography textbooks or these textbooks existed only in the form of private notebooks, uncontrolled by a single state authority, and whose authority was not supported by the authority of state-controlled (or church-controlled) schools, no means were possible to force people to observe the numerous orthographic conventions of the language. This applies even to the period when the paper had already appeared, but there was no literature orthographically standardized by the printing press yet. Examples are, say, Old Russian chronicles, civilian "chelobitnaya" requests, and other business papers, not shining with homogeneous orthography at all.

Here is how Morozov speaks about it: "At that time, financially stable, inquisitive person, could not yet read a book fluently as we do, who got this opportunity because of clearly printed letters, and therefore neither could he think fluently, much less write fluently. Writing, he was drawing each letter separately, like in print, was not putting punctuation marks, no one could teach him spelling, because we achieve it only after prolonged exercise. And one can safely say that *any manuscript with little spelling curiosities was already written from some printed copy*, where the possibility to replace incorrectly placed letters and words of the set with others before printing the book is not limited in any way. After all, the set of the book is carefully corrected several times... by the author and proofreaders... and in a manuscript, this cannot be done without corrupting it.

Only from that moment on did the possibility of uniform orthography appear, and until that time one could write only from its own hearing, either connecting a preposition with a word, or dividing one word into two, and

most often without putting any spaces between the words of the whole phrase, which again made the fluent reading of manuscripts difficult" ([4], pp. 173-174).

Reaching the literary heights of the best "ancient" works under these conditions seems clearly impossible.

The Structure of Ancient Writings

There is another circumstance closely related to the above. Undoubtedly, ancient works, both religious (the Bible, the Quran) and secular (old Russian "bylina" stories, "Nal and Damayanti"), are mere collections of individual stories, each dedicated to an episode clearly localized in time and space. This is understandable since in the early stages of developing literature no one could have such diverse prior knowledge that he could singlehandedly write a whole novella or a large complex tale with its content picked according to a unified plan. Even in much later literature, the haphazard stringing of episodes was one of the characteristic features (the chivalric novels and the Spanish knave novel).

Starting his literary work, an ancient writer was drawing each letter out painfully slow, guessing over almost every word how to write it correctly, so in one sitting he could compose only a very brief text. Because of the necessity to economize the writing material, he was not able to coordinate these texts with one another satisfactorily by rewriting them several times. He was able, having assembled (or independently composed) several dozen different stories, only to rewrite them almost literally one after another, unifying names or places of action. To give the story a kind of coherence, it was enough to connect the individual stories with "bridges of transition".

Initially, these bridges were very simple and unpretentious ("and then," "suddenly," etc.), but as literary technology progressed based on the ever-increasing flow of grammatically unified printed books, they became more and more complex. It took several centuries of literary experience for the art of building transitional bridges to reach the sophisticated level of the best modern novels.

In the best examples of ancient literature, this art has already advanced far enough and is exactly at the level of the Renaissance. This alone is sufficient to recognize ancient literature as a product maybe not of the age of printing but, **by definition, of an era immediately preceding printing.**

But then, what is it with paleography, which allegedly reliably dates some ancient manuscripts to the 8th-10th centuries? It is well known what a shambles paleographers got into when examining literary hoaxes of the 19th century. It is understandable, since **if, say, the handwriting of a certain time can be studied, described, and characterized, then for the exact same reason, it can also be forged** (Poggio, for instance, was a specialist in ancient handwriting). Therefore, it is possible to believe the paleographers only when the authenticity of the manuscript is confirmed by the whole complex of circumstances. As for the "ancient" manuscripts, it is just the opposite.

Rewriting manuscripts

Museum and library professionals are well aware of the tremendous effort that must be expended to keep books for a long time without corrupting them. They must be kept at a certain temperature, protected from dust, protected from dampness and direct sunlight, protected from mildew, insects and rodents, etc... etc. It is clear that in the conditions of the Middle Ages, books quickly became dilapidated, decayed, moldy, and exposed to all kinds of other evils. **For a book to survive through the ages, it must be rewritten periodically.**

With this in mind, traditional history claims that Latin books were copied in monasteries by pious monks who worked selflessly "for the salvation of the soul".

But several difficulties arise here at once.

First, all authorities agree on the recognition of the almost total ignorance of monks in, say, the 6-9th centuries. The answer to this is that among the masses of monks there must have been at least a few literates, who,

because of their learning, were especially respected, and to whom all conditions for work were created. But at that time, literate people were by no means respected; they were looked upon with fear, as sorcerers, touched by magic and unclean powers. Pope Gregory, I of the 7th century wrote to one of his bishops, "We cannot recall without shame that you are teaching someone grammar. The news of this act, for which we have great contempt, made a very heavy impression on us..." (see [39], p. 10). The official church authorities were forced to accept literacy as an inevitable and necessary evil. Under these conditions, even if individual enthusiasts did undertake the rewriting of non-clerical books, their activities were without a doubt only tolerated and certainly not encouraged in any way. And at that time, the copying of books also required considerable (due to the high cost of parchment) financial expenditures. How could supposed enthusiastic copyists keep finding the necessary funds (not once or twice, but for many centuries constantly)?

It is true that later, in the so-called High Middle Ages (11th-13th centuries), the attitude towards books changed, and "monastic charters encouraged monks in every way to work on copying of books, considering it a God-pleasing task" ([13], p. 46). The question, however, is who was rewriting ancient books in the critical 4th to 9th centuries?

Secondly, both under the external pressure of the official authorities and by their inner convictions, the monk copyists had to concentrate primarily on books of "divine" content. What impulses could have guided them to spend many years of their lives copying "pagan" works of antiquity? Monks are very, very bad candidates for the title of collectors of pagan texts. "The monasteries subjected the books from which they made copies to a strict selection" ([13], p. 47).

And yet it comes down to anecdotes. We have a note by Cicero dated March, 15, 44 supposedly and probably referring to the murder of Caesar: "I congratulate you, I rejoice for you... I want to know what you do and what is happening" (see [45], p. 184). This note is, therefore, **two**

thousand years old. And it too was conscientiously copied by pious monks?

We would also like to have an explanation, of how the monastic "strict selection" safely cleared Lucretius Carus' freethought poem "On the Nature of Things", allegedly copied in one of the early medieval French monasteries, although "... the charters of monasteries, which had scriptoriums, specifically forbade rewriting the works of heretics" ([13], p. 47).

Third, to rewrite scientific, say, mathematical works, one must at least understand their value, and have at least one possible reader in mind. And who in the seventh century could understand and appreciate Euclid, Archimedes, and Apollonius? The usual answer that these authors reached us through the Arabs does not stand up to criticism at least because from the alleged catastrophic destruction of ancient culture till the so-called "Arab Renaissance" several centuries passed, so we return to the previous question: who and why through all these

centuries kept (and therefore copied) books that no one needed, because of their incomprehensibility?

Fourth, for the monks of the early Middle Ages, classical Latin was an unknown language, or at any rate, an obsolete one. What was the point of transcribing books in that language? If any monk had taken the trouble to rewrite, say, Titus Livy, since he was doing it for his contemporaries and not for future humanists, he would have automatically tried to rewrite Livy in his contemporary "vulgar" Latin.

The rewriting of secular works is registered (in later centuries) in Russian history. As one would expect, this rewriting was not mechanical, but a creative process: the copyists were reducing the original and were making additions to it, they were deciphering names and obsolete words, were explaining realities of the past, etc... etc. (see for example [75], pp. 21 and 49-50).

It is impossible to imagine a monk who does not know classical Latin, to be sitting and rewriting Cicero, like a machine.

All these questions - but even more vividly - arise regarding Greek-language works as well. Who, for example, was rewriting the books of Josephus Flavius? The Jews did not know Greek and (according to conventional wisdom) were self-isolated in Talmudic scholarship, and the Greeks (Byzantines?) could have had neither the ability nor the desire to spend the time and energy to rewrite Flavius' Judaic writings.

We can see, therefore, that even if ancient literature existed, it could not have reached us, and therefore everything we know by that name is apocryphal. The specialist paleographers, apparently aware of the difficulties associated with the problem of the preservation of ancient literature, avoid them diligently, getting away with meaningless recitation. Here, for example, is what A.D. Lublinskaya writes in the book approved as a textbook for students of universities and pedagogical colleges:

"Antiquity left the Middle Ages the richest legacy... All this wealth of human thought accumulated over the centuries... was used in the Middle Ages in two ways. The part of the legacy which proved too difficult for a still forming class society of the Germanic and Celtic people (Roman law, science, philosophy, most of the literature) was largely preserved, but was, figuratively speaking, "put on the back burner"; it began to be taken out in the 12th and 13th centuries, and especially - in the Renaissance. The other part, the elementary basics of Latin education and the whole Christian legacy, was at once placed at the service of the Christian church, the young statehood, and the school, which is best designated as elementary, for it was giving only the most elementary knowledge" ([17], p. 46).

Lublinskaya sincerely thinks that the recitation of the "back burner" removes all questions. It does not even occur to her to ask herself what methods were used to carry out this "putting on the back burner"? Does she claim that the barbarian Germanic tribes of the Goths and Vandals, who

are reported to have sacked Rome and put to fire almost all the archives and libraries of the Roman Empire, before looting and burning, equipped special squads of Roman document searchers and cultural work custodians that carried out the examination of the practical value of the captured papyrus scrolls, cuneiform tablets, and parchment codices, separating simple from "too complicated" and putting aside in a very "back burner" (for 800-900 years!) ancient manuscripts of scientific nature, inaccessible to their understanding? And what kind of "back burner" was it, preserving manuscripts better than modern air-conditioned book depositories?

The statistics of the dating of codices and individual notebooks and fragments of manuscript books containing (fully or partially) ancient texts are also very revealing. According to an oral report by V. N. Prischepenko, he examined 1,000 (one thousand) such codices and fragments randomly selected (to ensure representativeness) and discovered that modern paleography attributes only 17 texts (1.7%) to the Early

Middle Ages (5th-11th centuries), 211 texts (21.1%) to the High Middle Ages (12th-13th centuries), and 772 texts (77.2%) to the Renaissance (14th-16th centuries). In fact, the same is affirmed by the paleographers themselves (but without quantitative estimations): "...at this period (11th-12th centuries - *Auth.*) there is the greatest number of dated and signed codices created directly in monastery workshops of writing" ([13], p. 45). Later "...from the beginning of the 13th century until the introduction of book printing... The center of manuscript book production moves to cities" ([13], p. 44), where a more productive handicraft production of handwritten books is organized (see [13], p. 51).

Antique "letters"

Certain genres of ancient literature also raise serious doubts. Take, for example, the so-called "letters," say, the famous letter of Pliny Jr., describing the eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed the Herculaneum and Pompeii.

"So you wonder how I spend my days in my Tuscan villa? - Pliny writes to a friend. - I wake up, usually at one o'clock (sunny time), sometimes earlier, rarely later. I leave the windows closed: thought is brighter and livelier in the darkness and silence... I work more or less, depending on whether I feel situated. Then I call *my secretary*, tell him to open the shutters, and *dictate what I have composed*. He leaves, I call him again, send him away again... I continue to compose and dictate. I get in the carriage... After a little rest, I loudly read some Latin or Greek, more to strengthen my chest than my voice, but it is good for my voice, too. I also take a walk, *am rubbed with oil*, *do gymnastics*, and take a bath. At lunch, *my wife* or a few friends sit with me at the table and *we read something aloud*. At dessert, a comic actor or a musician with a lyre comes into the room..." (see [2], pp. 237-238; italics by Morozov).

The translator of this text, D.S. Merezhkovsky, exclaims in his commentary: "How much these ancient people resemble us! How little does the very fabric of everyday human life change! Only the patterns are

different, but the basis is the same" (see [2], p. 238). But is the life described really that old? It is all suspiciously similar to the pages of modern "everyday life" novels. Furthermore, Pliny gives no real details, no news of his life or the lives of his acquaintances; the whole text has only one purpose: to show the reader the life of a "Roman aristocrat". This is a tendentious emphasis, not for a friend (who, incidentally, should already have known that Pliny's villa was in Tuscany since the text implies that Pliny had been living there for a long time), but for an outsider reader, and it is not just a letter, but a **literary work**, which has the purpose, in the form of a private letter to introduce the public to the home life and environment of the "Roman writer"; The whole setting and characterization of Pliny's life in the villa is not real but is as the Renaissance writers imagined it to be, and the style of the letter is the style of that time.

And here, by the way, is what Pliny writes to Tacitus, to whose texts, as we have seen, Poggio Bracciolini is directly related (see [2], p. 240)

"I do not know whether we will both deserve honors in posterity, but I would say: by our intelligence - to hope for this would be vanity; but by our diligence, by our respect for posterity. Let us pursue our path: even if it has led few to light and glory, it has nevertheless brought many out of darkness and oblivion."

In another letter: "What a sweet, what a noble friendship we have, oh Tacitus! How joyful to think that if posterity will not forget us, they will speak of our alliance everywhere, of our sincere friendship, of our brotherhood...!" and so on, in a similar vein. In general, one cannot help but suspect that Poggio was not a man without humor in composing these "letters" to himself (and, let us note, only following the example of Petrarch, who loved to write "letters" to the ancients; see § 3). § 3).

In ([2], pp. 240-245) a detailed analysis of all of Pliny's letters is given, and many obvious anachronisms are shown, characterizing the author as a person of the Renaissance. We will not dwell on this, because we want to emphasize only the fact that this "letter" (like all other allegedly extant

letters of the era) is clearly a literary work, and not at all, as is assured, a private letter.

It is worth asking ourselves, by the way, what material was this letter originally written on?

Ancient Literary Criticism

The existence of the genre of literary criticism in ancient literature is also troubling. This genre was possible only when the literary work was completely detached from the author and distributed in many identical copies. Before the advent of printing, even the very idea of criticism of the public interest was impossible.

Names of the Ancient Authors

It is also curious that, as Morozov points out (see [Z], pp. 204-205), the translation of the names of classical writers often comes out as comical. For example, the full name of Virgil (Publius Virgil Maro) can be translated as "Public maiden chestnut (or cat's marjoram)", with "chestnut" meaning in Italian a secret reading book, and the

name of Ovid as "Public egg nose". Cornelius Nepos means "Horned Grandson," Marcus Cicero means "Wilted Pea," Brutus means "Cattle" (!), Flaccus means "Lop-eared," etc... etc.

Don't we witness a peculiar manifestation of a sense of humor of humanists here?

This has long been pointed out, but usually, such names are interpreted as nicknames describing the physical features of their bearers: "Nosy", "Loopy-eared", etc. It is believed, for example, that Cicero got his name because of his wart, which resembled a pea (see [143], p. 99). However, this is contradicted by the fact that the nickname (the cognomen, to be precise) was given to the Romans at birth immediately. Curiously, noting this contradiction, the author [143] does not comment on it and does not draw any conclusions from it.

§ 6. Distribution of genres of ancient literature over time

In this paragraph we will study the main genres of ancient literature's distribution over time: epic and lyric, satire, tragedy, comedy, bucolic and didactic, philosophy, and its oddities first noticed by Morozov. We will mainly be guided by I. M. Troysky's thorough review of the history of ancient literature (see [86]). The information borrowed from Troysky is reported below, as a rule, without references.

Epic and Lyric in the Ancient Greece

These two genres include the works of about 50 poets about whom the historical tradition gives us information.

The earliest are regarded as semi-mythical ancient Greek poets before the 13th century B.C. "Of this time there were only stories of a mythological nature: an example of them may be the tale of the Thracian singer **Orpheus**, son of the Muse Calliope, whose singing enchanted wild beasts, stopped flowing waters, and made the forests move after the singer" ([86], p. 17).

Besides Orpheus, a number of other legendary poets are named: **Museus**, **Eutolius**, and **Pamir** (see [4], p. 207). But not a line has survived from these poets.

The next oldest author is the famous **Homer**, to whom two great poems, The Iliad and The Odyssey, are attributed. The Iliad and the Odyssey have no direct historical evidence to date. Specialists still consider the so-called "Homeric question", which includes the whole range of problems associated with these poems, not yet fully resolved. But at least most researchers recognize the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. as the time of completion of the Homeric poems.

The Homeric poems were first printed in Milan by Dimitri Chalcocondylas at the end of the 15th century A.D. Their first translation into Latin was made by Leonzio Pilate as early as 1389 (see [88], pp. 97-98). The manuscript of the translation is now kept in Paris. In 1440 Peer Candido Dechembri translated 5 or 6 books of the Iliad into Latin in prose, and a few years later Lorenzo Balla

arranged 16 books of the Iliad in Latin prose. Balla's translation was printed in 1474.

A follower of Homer was **Hesiod**, whose time of life can only be approximated: the late 8th or early 7th century B.C. Two poems have survived from Hesiod: "Theogony" and "Labor and Days," as well as excerpts from the poem "Catalogue of Women," recently enriched by papyrus finds.

The most ancient lyric poet known to us, **Callinus** of Ephesus (first half of the 7th century B.C.), is also attributed to this century. From him, only one poem - an appeal to defend the homeland from the attack of enemies - has been preserved. The lyric poem of admonitory content, which contains encouragement and appeals to important and serious action, had a special name - an elegy. Thus Cullin is the first elegiac poet.

The next elegiac poet is **Tirteus** of Sparta (probably at the turn of the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.).

The first love poet to create an erotic elegy was the Ionian **Mimneom** (second half of the 7th century B.C.).

Several small poems have survived from him. Some surviving fragments of his poems also reflect political and military themes.

At the turn of 600 B.C., the Athenian legislator **Solon** wrote elegies and iambes. Political and moral themes predominate in his poems.

At the same time (more precisely, somewhat later, in the 6th century B.C.) **Theognides** of Megara wrote. From him survives a collection of short elegiac poems intended for performance at feasts. Some of these poems are now attributed to other authors, but it is thought that the main core belongs to Theognides. Another type of lyric is the so-called monodic lyric, intended for solo performance. The most prominent representatives of monodic lyricism are **Alcaeus** and **Sappho** (first half of the 6th century B.C.), their surviving poems are preserved in the transmission of later antique writers. They are also found in Egyptian papyri discovered by Grenfell and Hunt in 1905 at Oxyrinchus. Next comes **Anacreon**, whose work is attributed to the second half of the 6th century B.C.

Another type of lyric poetry is the choral lyric designed for chorus performance in cult rites. It distinguishes between dithyrambs, cult hymns in honor of Dionysus; epinikias, songs glorifying the winner in public Greek gymnastic contests; and encomiums, hymns in honor of a particular person.

In the second half of the 7th century B.C., **Alcianus** was a representative of choral lyricism. Only brief quotations from his hymns have survived. The only large excerpt of Parthenius, a maiden choral hymn, was found in 1835 on a papyrus in an Egyptian tomb.

Choral lyrics up to the end of the 6th century B.C. are known only very sporadically. Only the names of **Arion**, **Stesichor**, and **Ivic** (who lived at the same time as Anacreon) have been preserved.

A greater representative of choral lyrics lived at the end of the 6th and beginning of the 5th century B.C. It is **Simonides of Keos** (556-468 B.C.). It is true that only a small number of fragments of Simonides' lyrics have

survived; not a single whole poem did. However, Simonides' fame was based not only on chorics, he was also known as one of the creators of epigrams.

Around this time lived the classic of solemn choral lyricism, **Pindar** of Thebes (518-442 B.C.). He is said to have written 17 books, of which four have survived; a total of 45 poems. Pindar's peans (hymns in honor of Apollo) are found in the same Oxyrhynchus papyri.

As early as the 15th century, the humanist Lorenzo Balla mentions Pindar as a poet whom he preferred to Virgil. Manuscripts of Pindar's works are preserved in the Vatican (see [88], p. 171).

Until recently, Pindar was the only Choric lyricist from whom entire works have survived.

Pindar's contemporary (and rival) was **Bacchymedes**. Twenty of his poems were discovered by Kenyon in a collection of papyri acquired by the British Museum shortly before 1891 in Egypt. The seller of these papyri, as the Time newspaper wrote on January 19, 1891, "is

inconvenient to name for certain reasons" (see [89], pp. 389-392).

We also know the name of **Terpander** (7th century B.C.), whose works have not reached us, the name of **Onomakrites** (7th century B.C.), and the name of **Archilochus** (mid-7th century B.C.) whose lyrical works have reached us only in fragments. He is better known to us as the founder of the satirical iambus.

There are fragments of information about three other poets: **Zven of Ascalon** (5th century B.C.), **Cheryl** (5th century B.C.), and the poetess **Praxilla** (mid-5th century B.C.); the latter, they say, was famous for table songs, but she also wrote dithyrambs and hymns.

Here, in fact, ends the list of lyric poets in ancient Greece. Then, for a whole century, Greek civilization has virtually no lyric poetry. True, there are mentions of **Antimachus** of Colophon (early 4th century B.C.), the author of the epic poem "Phyvandes" and the elegy "Lida". However, he was, apparently (only fragments of it have

survived), a representative of another genre, sliding closer to didactics.

The sources also mention the poetess **Erinca**, whose only known poem "The Spinning Wheel" has not survived, and the two Ions - **Ion of Chios** and **Ion of Ephesus**.

At the turn of the 3rd century B.C. Philitas (340-285 BC) lived, the founder of the so-called Alexandrian school of poetry, from whose works almost nothing has survived either. At about the same time lived **Asclepiades** (the healer) of Samos, who adjoined the school of Philitas. It is with some stretch that the lyric poets include representatives of "scholarly" poetry **Callimachus** (310-240 BC), **Apollonius** of Rhodes, a pupil of Callimachus, and **Euphorion** of Chalkis (b. ca. 276 BC).

The list of lyric poets of ancient Greece ends with **Aristides** of Miletus (probably late 2nd century B.C.; the only collection of his love stories known by name has not come down to us) and **Archius** (ca. 102-63 B.C.), of whom we know only from Cicero's defense speech. However, the

35 epigrams preserved under the name of Archius are sometimes attributed not to **Archius** of Antioch, in whose defense Cicero made his speech, but to his namesake, **Archius** of Mytilene, who also lived in the 1st century B.C.

Thereafter, poets in Greece disappear completely until the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., when several poets reappear: **Ausonius** (310-395), **Claudianus** (4th and 5th centuries), and **Namatianus** (c. 416). Very little is known about them.

Epic and Lyricism in Ancient Rome

Ancient Roman poetry begins with the historical epic of **Quintus Ennius** (239-169 B.C.), which is an imitation of the Greek epic. This poet first introduced the hexameter into Latin verse. His 18-book poem, *The Annals*, which describes the entire history of Rome, is known to us only by quotations and expositions. He is also said to have translated Greek comedies and tragedies into Latin (which have survived only in fragments) and popularized other Greek literary genres.

After Ennius, we jump to the first century B.C. The epicureanism that was spreading at this time in ancient Rome was reflected in the poetry of Titus **Lucretius Carus** (born c. 98 B.C., d. 55 B.C.), who wrote the poem "On the Nature of Things." According to a report in the chronicle of the Christian writer Jerome, the poem was not completely finished but was published (?) by Cicero. By its genre, it should be classified as didactic poetry. "Familiarity with Lucretius was not interrupted until Carolin times and ensured (? - *Auth.*) the preservation of the poem in the 9th century manuscripts. In the later Middle Ages Lucretius was forgotten and rediscovered only in the 15th century." ([86], p. 352). Voigt specifies that in the 15th century Lucretius was being copied by the humanist Niccoli in Florence (see [88], p. 341).

In the same 1st century B.C., poets who gravitated toward Alexandrian ("scholarly" and "lightweight") poetry appear in Rome. Among them was **Gaius Valerius Catullus** (born in the 80s of the 1st century B.C., d. ca. 54 B.C.). A collection of his 116 works has come down to us, with small

poems - "polymeters" at the beginning, epigrams at the end, and large poems in the middle.

There is information about other poets of the same direction: **Valerius Cato**, **Calva**, and **Cinna**.

Publius Virgil Maro (70-19 B.C.), the author of the poem *Aeneid*, is considered the most celebrated poet of Imperial Rome. He also wrote the shepherd's idylls collected in the "*Bucolicas*" collection. His friend was the elegiac poet **Gaius Cornelius Gallus** (69-26 BC).

Other talented elegiac poets were **Albius Tibullus** (b. 50s B.C., d. 19 B.C.) and **Sextus Propertius** (b. c. 49 B.C., d. after 15 B.C.). Two collections of poems each survive from Tibullus and Propertius.

Quintus Horace Flaccus (65-8 B.C.), best known as the author of iambic poems and satires, also produced three books of lyric poems, which ancient commentators called odes. He also wrote in the style of monodic lyricism.

Publius Ovidius Nazon (43 B.C. - 18 A.D.) is the last known poet who ended his life already in our era.

Voigt reports that early, at the time of Pope Nicholas V, there was a manuscript of Ovid's works in his library (see [88], p. 181).

Ovid had been translated into French early, by Philippe de Vitry. Moreover, the French translations of Ovid are mentioned in the catalog of King Charles the Wise's library compiled in 1337 by Gilles Mallet (see [88], pp. 296 and 299).

Four epic poets are known in Rome after the beginning of our era: **Marcus Annaeus Lucanus** (39-65), **Papinius Publius Statius** (d. c. 95), **Valerius Flaccus** (died about 90), and **Silius Italicus** (26-101).

Of Lucan's numerous works only one has survived, the historical epic *On the Civil War* or *Pharsalia* in 10 books. Statius is known as the author of the poem *The Thebaid*. Flaccus reworked Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica*, and

Italicus arranged Livy's account of the Second Punic War (the poem *Punica*) into rhymes.

Lucan was the first Latin poet translated into French under King Charles V (see [88], p. 302).

Finally, there are a small number of poets of the later era (4th to 5th century A.D.): **Quintus of Smyrna** (4th century), **Voni** (5th century), and his disciple **Museus**. Little is known about them.

Satires

Satires are traditionally a separate genre, although there are relatively few representatives of this genre.

In Greece, the first representative of the satirical trend is **Archilochus**, who lived in the middle of the 7th century B.C. He wrote fables, the skill of which, according to legends, drove the victims of Archilochus' mockery to suicide. He also wrote lyrical works, but they have not come down to us in their entirety.

His contemporary **Simonides of Amorg** wrote didactic elegies and satirical iambs.

In the second half of the 6th century B.C., **Hipponantus** of Ephesus wrote satirical poems.

After that, we do not know any satirical poets until the 3rd century B.C., when **Herod** appears, whose mimiambes were, however, found only in 1891, purchased by the British Museum, and published by Kenyon. But these are, in fact, no longer satires, just iambic-sized mimes.

"A peculiar form of satire was created by **Menippus** of Hadar (early 3rd century)... He composed philosophical-satirical dialogues with fantastic narrative framing, like flying to heaven... Showing the insignificance of earthly goods, a satire on religion, a polemic with hostile philosophical schools - this is the content of Menippus' work, as it is identifiable by insignificant scraps and reflections in later writers" ([86], p. 235).

After this, there are again no satirists in Greece until the second century A.D., when the prolific satirist sophist

Lucian (120-180) appears. Lucian was first translated in the 15th century by Lapo de Castiglionchio and Aurispa (see [88], pp. 33 and 158).

Roman literature is richer in satirists. The first satirical poet, **Gaius Lucilius** (d. 102 B.C.), combined parody, iambography, and Menippus style in one genre. Of his 30 (!) books, only about a thousand fragments, very small in size, have survived.

In the next century, we also know only one satirist, **Quintus Horace Flaccus** (65-8 A.D.). His collection of iambic poems, *The Elades*, and two collections of satires have reached us.

Two satirists survive from the first century A.D.: **Aulus Persius Flaccus** (34-62) and **Marcus Valerius Martial** (42-101). Persius wrote only two satires, which were published (?!) posthumously by Cornutus. And Martial already wrote epigrams instead of satires.

Presumably to the first century belongs also **Petronius Arbiter** with his *Satyricon*.

The next was **Decimus Junius Juvenal** (50-127). His satires were already known to the 15th century humanists. Ognibene da Lonigo wrote commentaries on him, and Gregory of Sanok taught Juvenal along with other ancient authors at the Krakow University in 1439.

Juvenal is followed by the famous **Apuleius** (b. 124), at whom the list of satirists ends.

Tragedies

Antique tradition calls **Thespidas** the first tragic poet of Athens and points to 334 B.C. as the date of the first production of a tragedy during the "great Dionysias". Even earlier, in 494 B.C., the poet **Phrynich** supposedly staged the tragedy *The Conquest of Miletus*. These works of the first tragedians have not survived.

The tragedians of the 5th century B.C. are known to us. - Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Aeschylus (524-456 B.C.) is said to have written 90 works, of which only seven have survived, and 72 plays are known by titles and small fragments.

Sophocles (496-406 B.C.) is said to have written 123 plays, of which, again, only seven have survived.

All seven of Sophocles' tragedies were already known in the 15th century when Aurispa translated them for Cosmos de Medici (see [88], p. 116). In 1912 a new drama by Sophocles, *The Pathfinders*, was published in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*.

Euripides (480-406 B.C.) is said to have written 92 dramas, of which 19 have come down to us. In addition, from tragedies that have not survived in their entirety, a great number of separate fragments have survived.

We also know the names of three tragic poets of the late 5th century BC: **Agathon**, **Achaeus**, and **Ionas** of Chios.

After the 5th century B.C., there were no tragic poets in Greece.

Roman tragedy has only five authors.

The first drama was produced in 240 B.C. by **Livius Andronicus** (d. c. 204 B.C.). About the same year a second Roman poet, **Gnaeus Nevi**, began his dramatic activity. Somewhat later lived **Quintus Ennius** (239-169 B.C.), whose fragments of tragedies have come down to us. His nephew **Pacuvius** (220-130 BC) was also a tragic poet.

The last classic of the Roman tragedy was **Actius** (170-90 BC). His tragedies were staged long after his death.

Comedies

The first creator of satirical dramas for the Athenian theater is traditionally called **Pratinus** of Phliunt (in the Northern Peloponnes). He lived at the end of the 6th century BC.

Epicharmus lived at this time. "The activities of this poet took place in Syracuse in the late 6th and the first half of the 5th century... Only titles and minor fragments have reached us" ([86], p. 157).

In the second half of the 5th century B.C., we already have three authors: **Cratinus**, **Eupolid**, and **Aristophanes**. The first two are known to us only in fragments. From Aristophanes (427-388 BC) out of 44 plays, 11 have survived completely. By the 15th century, not all of Aristophanes' comedies were yet known. Thus, Bessarion, a famous disseminator of ancient Greek literature, did not know Aristophanes at all, and there were only three of his comedies in the library of Cosmos de Medici (see [88], p. 116).

The names (not mentioned by Troysky) of three other authors of this period are known: **Magnetus**, **Eumolpe** (445 B.C.), and **Susarion** (480 B.C.).

In the 4th century B.C. are known **Antiphanes** and **Alexides**, of whose works a great number of titles and a number of fragments have survived, **Diphilus** (born 350 B.C.) and **Philemon** (360-262 B.C.), of whose works only fragments and Roman adaptations of Plautus and Terentius have survived.

At some time at the end of the 4th century B.C. lived the parodist **Rinfon** and the comic **Eubulus**.

Continuing the tradition of Philemon and Diphilus was **Menander** (342-292 B.C.). Until recently we knew of Menander only from adaptations of Plautus and Terentius and isolated fragments. The situation changed in 1905 when papyrus fragments of his works were found in Oxirinchus. Almost at the same time, Lefevre found a papyrus book (codex) of 17 sheets containing up to 1300 verses by Menander (see [89], p. 401) at the site of the former Aphroditopolis on the left bank of the Nile, among the ruins of a wooden dwelling. In 1911 this papyrus of Menander was published again with some new additions.

Menander is believed to have written more than a hundred comedies.

In Rome, comedies were written by the same **Livy Andronicus** and **Gnaeus Nevius**, who translated tragedies into Latin.

They are followed by **Plautus** (who died about 184 B.C.), the first Roman author whose complete works have survived. At his time lived also **Cecilius Statius** (died in 168 BC) and **Terentius Publius Aphrus** (195-159 BC), from whose works six comedies have survived.

At the end of the II century B.C., there were comedy authors **Aphranius**, **Titinius**, and **Attas**, from whom fragments have survived. **Pomponius** and **Liberius** are also known.

Bucolics and didactics

We combine these two genres because of the small number of authors.

Theocritus (born about 300 B.C.) wrote "pastoral" bucolic poems.

"Scholarly" poems were written by **Aratus** (315-240 B.C.).

In the second century B.C., however. **Nicander** wrote didactic poems, which later served as a model for Virgil. **Parthenius** was also active in this century.

In the middle of the second century **Moschus**, and at the end of this century, **Bion** of Smyrna reproduced the idylls of Theocritus.

These include a number of lyric poets with didactic tendencies: **Antimachus** (early 4th century B.C.), **Callimachus** (310-240 B.C.), **Apollo of Rhodes** (early 3rd century B.C.), and **Euphorion** (b. 276 B.C.).

In Rome, didactic poems were written by Titus **Lucretius Carus** and **Virgil** in the first century B.C., and in the first century A.D. - by **Ovid** and **Manilius**.

Philosophy

The first Greek philosopher **Thales** (early 6th century B.C.) left no written works; the same goes for his disciple **Anaximander** (610-546 B.C.). Of the famous **Pythagoras** and his school, nothing remains but legends.

The philosophers who followed **Anaximenes** (583-525 BC), a disciple of Anaximander; **Heraclitus** (b. 544 BC), **Anaxagoras** (500-428 BC), and **Democritus** (460-370 BC) are known to us only from fragments of their works.

Plato (427-347 B.C.) was the founder of ancient idealism. Of his works, nine collections of four dialogs each have survived, as well as a collection of Plato's letters. However (see above § 4) there is still no unanimous opinion on the authenticity of Plato's writings.

Plato's pupil **Aristotle** (384-322 B.C.) allegedly had three groups of works. The first of them is the dialogues, which he himself published (?!). It is claimed that during almost the entire Hellenistic period Aristotle was known even to specialist philosophers mainly by his dialogues. But two other groups of works belong to him: archival materials and treatises on various fields of knowledge. A complete corpus of his treatises was allegedly found in 100 B.C. and published (?!) in Rome. This helped preserve the treatises to the present day, yet the rest of Aristotle's writings have been lost.

"Aristotle in the Middle Ages was much more familiar to scholars than Plato. His writings on physics were reported early by the Arabs, and on logic and metaphysics - by Boetius. Almost all the works of Aristotle that we now know were already known, in Latin translations and expositions, sometimes even in several" ([88], p. 148).

Aristotle's "Athenian Polity" was not found until 1891 under mysterious circumstances in a collection of papyri acquired by the Bristol Museum and published by Kenyon. A facsimile of this papyrus was also published the same year.

Theophrastus, a disciple of Aristotle, is considered to be the author of "The Characters" treatise.

The other philosophers mentioned in the sources are **Xenophanes** (570-479 B.C.), **Epicurus** (341-270 B.C.), known to us mainly in the account of Lucretius in his poem (see [69], p. 225), **Hegesius** (early 3rd century B.C.), and **Bion Borispheite** (early 3rd century B.C.).

In ancient Rome, the first philosopher is regarded as **Panethius** (180-110 B.C.), the creator of an eclectic philosophy combining Stoicism with the theories of Plato and Aristotle. His disciple was **Posidonius** (135-51 B.C.).

After this, we go directly to the first century CE, when **Philonis** of Alexandria (b. 20 B.C.) and **Seneca** (3 B.C.-65 C.E.) lived.

Seneca, along with Cicero, Pliny, and Virgil, was well known during the period of humanism. The apocryphal correspondence between Seneca and the apostle Paul (composed allegedly in the 4th century A.D.) was very popular. "As a result, Seneca was regarded in the Middle Ages as an author close to Christianity" ([86], p. 442).

In the middle of the first century lived **Epictetus** and **Quintilian** (30-96 A.D.).

Conclusions

This study reveals with all clarity that all ancient Greek literature is divided in time into periods. In the first period,

the most distant, the legendary heroic epic flourished. From 700 to 500 B.C., Ancient Greece is dominated by lyrical, epic, and satirical writers. By 500 B.C. all these trends disappear and tragedy flourished, on the contrary, followed by comedy, which disappears without a trace by 400 B.C. Philosophers appear in its place. As soon as the philosophers ceased, comedy reappears, never to be seen again from 300 B.C. until the age of humanism. Not long before, philosophical thought dies down. Comedy and philosophy are replaced by the gray and colorless genres of didactics and bucolics, which complete the history of literature in Greece.

Excluding the Homeric period, all literary work in ancient Greece accounts for about 600 years. Of those 600 years, tragedy accounts for only 100 years. In the other 500 years, not a single author of tragedy appeared either before or after. Comedy takes 150 years. In the other 450 years, not a single author of comedy appeared either before or after.

Satire had so few representatives that it flashed sometime before 500, and the sarcastic iambus never struck the ancient Greeks again.

After 500, the Greeks stopped composing lyric poetry. They switched entirely to "serious" reflection (for nearly 200 years). And when they, too, got bored with this, they began to teach the younger generation (also for 200 years).

The situation is similar in Ancient Rome.

For the first 150 years, there was no one in ancient Rome except the dramatists (comic and tragic). By 100 B.C. the dramatists had exhausted their talents, and in their place, a tremendous wave of poets began for a full 200 years. The philosophers who followed quickly bored the Romans as well; all that was left were the bitter satirists, who, however, in 100 years were also dead silent.

This, of course, is nothing new. This "change of genres" is well known and is described (maybe not in as much detail) in any textbook. Literary historians never draw any

conclusions from it. It is pretty clear that such a position is wrong.

Here is what Morozov writes about it:

"...how is it possible to imagine that this is exactly what happened in the development of literature... of an advanced nation, where poetry and prose, science and fiction, in all their forms, represent only different sides of the activity of the awakened human genius, rushing in all available directions always and everywhere... How can it be imagined that... the Greeks for several hundred years were developing only one kind of literature in one of their fields, then, having abandoned it, for several hundred years were engaged elsewhere in another, then, having abandoned that also, for several centuries were engaged in the 3rd, and in a new place again? Is such a division of literary labor by city and age possible?

Certainly not even imaginable. And yet we are told that it was so..." ([3], p. 206).

"Until the 5th century only lyrical, heroic, and satirical poets are born, and the first of the heroic poets create... whole epics like the Iliad and the Odyssey. But writing them in those times' large handwriting would require a scroll of parchment up to a kilometer long... Why are there no historians at the time of the Odyssey, even though historical records are always the first subject to which writing is attached? Why does this sowing of lyrical and heroic poets cease until the Renaissance, and in its place grow rich sprouts of dramatic authors of the 3rd period or, better said, the 3rd sowing?

Also how come dramatic authors, both comedians and tragedians cease since the 4th century B.C. till the Renaissance, and in their place sprouts come out from the sowing of bucolic and didactic poets...?

...If you'll tell me: this "alternating fruit farming" occurred only because in the first and second periods all but the poets were lost, in the 3rd - all but the comedians and tragedians and sophists, etc., I'll reply that *this is totally impossible from the viewpoint of the mathematical probability*

theory, according to which of all genera approximately the same number of percent must have been lost.

If you'll tell me: there were different fashions in literary work in different periods: in one, a fashion for poetry, in another, a fashion for drama, ... then I will answer: *there are fashions for outfits only*. It goes without saying that in ancient times, mothers could dress their newborn children in napkins of different cuts and colors in different centuries, just as writers could be original in this or that manner of presentation, but it is absolutely impossible to admit that in one century mothers had a fashion to give birth to brunettes exclusively, in another - to blonds, in another - to curly-haired and in the 4th - to hairless children. But don't we see the same thing with ...Greek mothers giving birth to lyricists in one century, dramatists - in another, theologians - in a 3rd, chroniclers - in a 4th?

Is it not more natural to suppose that they were all born in disorder, as they should be, but except **this was during the Renaissance** and on its eve, and indeed **there was a fashion** (or just a custom) to apocryphy lyric and

heroic poems to the oldest centuries; dramas, comedies, philosophical and oratorical works - after that, and bucolic and didactic poetry - even later ...

...The idea, still held in the heads of historians of the ancient world, of the possibility of "the alternating fruit farming" in the mental creation of mankind and of leaving one or another part of its brain to rest is quite unacceptable from an evolutionary point of view ...*all that our Renaissance primary sources tell us about the rich mental creativity of the Greeks in the pre-Christian era is completely implausible from ethno-psychological and evolutionary viewpoint* and must be rejected by serious science ever since it began rejecting all miraculous in the historical life of people and stood on the evolutionary viewpoint..." ([3], pp. 227-229).

Here, first of all, the theoretical and probabilistic consideration of the approximate uniformity of "loss and forgetting" of works of different genres over the centuries is interesting. Is it possible to check this theoretical proposition experimentally?

The difficulty of such experimental verification is about creating the artificial mechanism of "loss and forgetting". We could, for example, propose the following: let us take some fairly complete, but not comprehensive, review of medieval and modern literature of some country, say, France, and we will, by definition, consider the works not mentioned in this review to be "forgotten and lost".

This idea belongs to A. S. Mishchenko, who made such an experiment by taking an overview of French literature from the article "France" in the Soviet Historical Encyclopedia. It turned out that, actually, no selective forgetting of particular genres occurs.

However, another mechanism might be suggested. Tell me, which French playwrights do you remember? Certainly, you will remember Molière, Corneille, and Racine (all 17th century), and from the 18th century, you will remember (unless you have special knowledge) probably Beaumarchais only. In the 19th century, you can't think of a single French playwright, except maybe Hugo, etc. It turns

out that the 17th century was three times more fruitful for playwrights in France than the 16th or 19th centuries!

This objection to Morozov's considerations seems very convincing at first sight. However, if we think about it better, it becomes clear that it is irrelevant. The fact that we remember the playwrights of the 17th century and have forgotten the numerous writers of the 18th and 19th centuries is not because the works of the latter have not reached us (everyone can find them in libraries), but because of our upbringing and education. Would we have known Moliere if he had not been taught at school, constantly republished, or performed in theaters? The writers of antiquity have allegedly come down to us through a thousand years of **interrupted** cultural tradition, and during that thousand years, the most famous and authoritative writers had the same chance to survive, as well as the most pitiful, because they were all equal before mold, dampness, and mice.

One might also ask, is it true that "there are fashions for outfits only?" It would seem, on the contrary, that in the

history of literature there is a continuous change of genres. In periods of social upheaval and revolution, poetry (mostly heroic-patriotic) and theater (in the form of mass theatrical spectacles and acts) flourish, while in quieter times the priority is given to the lyric and the psychological novel. We ourselves are witnessing the extraordinary growth of science fiction literature, which practically did not exist forty years ago. But the bursts of this fashion are not at all as great as they seem to us at close quarters; in spite of everything, most of the literary output now consists of novels, like it was before. It is not so much the genres themselves that are subject to literary fashions as it is our appreciation of them and the amount of attention they receive from critics and the near-literary public. If a break happened in the literary-cultural tradition now, and in the remnants of our time archaeologists and philologists of the future will not find any "alternating fruit economy" analogous to that of antiquity.

Theater of Euripides

Morozov also subjects (see [4], pp. 561-652) the very works of "ancient" drama to research in order to detect traces of forgery in them themselves. We shall not set forth all Morozov's considerations here but shall confine ourselves only to those that apply to Euripides.

Here is what Morozov writes:

"...Here, for example, is Euripides' "The Beautiful Helen", staged, judging by the inscription, on the Athenian stage exactly 412 years before "The Birth of Christ".

In its script, in the foreground is the tomb of the deceased king. Behind it is the wall of a kremlin, its gates wide open. Then a hill on which rises the sumptuous palace of Theoklemen, but its doors are locked. Scene One. In front of the tomb, on a bed of leaves and branches, Helen. Morning. The queen rises from a bed.

HELEN.

Here the virgin waves of the Nile gleam

Instead of the dew of the heavens, it lets to drink

- as soon as *snow(!!) comes down in Egypt* -

for fields that lie

across the lowlands...

(In a footnote Morozov also cites the Greek text to show that "snow in Egypt" is not a freestyle of the translator. - *Auth.*).

The reader himself will understand that blush of shame on my face prevents me from directing his special attention to the snow covering Egypt...

I will only say that no Ionian or any other Greek could invent such an incongruity, but only a Frenchman - not more southern than Paris or a German - not more southern than Vienna.

But notice again the setting of the scene, necessary especially in the 4th act, when "against the background of dawn, one slave woman carry a highly raised burning **torch**

and a bowl of smoking sulfur and her mistress stops and looks long at the pre-dawn **sky**..."

The scenic setting is even more complex in those places of the "classical authors" where the gods appear. Here, for example, is the tragedy "Hercules", by the same Euripides, that says modestly that it is "presented in Athens about 420 B.C."

SCENE FOUR

Darkness falls. Muffled peals of thunder. A winged young goddess, Irida, in a saffron cloak, and a hideous bony creature, Lyssa, with snakes in her black hair and a hideous face, dressed in black, appear in the air above Hercules' house.

...there is no description of the scene in the Greek text from which I checked the translation, but it is given correctly by the translator: without such a setting it is impossible to play "Helen" or "Hercules" in front of the audience...

...What technical means could be used to create this gloom and visions of speaking ghosts on the Athenian open stage 420 years before The Birth of Christ? We can safely say: **by no means, so nothing of the kind was produced.** So Euripides, and with him, all his "classical contemporaries," were already well acquainted with the Western European theater of the Renaissance, when... machines on closed stages could produce both light and darkness, ...and even carry flying actors on black wires invisible to spectators in semi-darkness.

And don't let them tell me that ancient sets cannot be judged by ours and that they could have been made very crudely. There is a limit to any crudeness, and in the tragic parts of a performance, crudeness could never reach the point where, instead of horror, it excites laughter in the audience. After all, any actor knows that the theatrical audience is more receptive to funny than tragic.

Thus, in antiquity, the appearance of a horrible mystical Furia or a ghost in the air could not be arranged in the form of an obvious scarecrow swinging on a rope, it

must've excited the illusion of the supernatural in the audience, otherwise, the tragedy would instantly jump into a comedy...

So we see that from the aspect of the decorative (decorational, apparently - *Auth.*) technique, *the classical Greek dramas... could not have been written without familiarity with Renaissance theatrical technique*. But the same thing comes out in the structure of their verse..." ([4], pp. 563-538).

We will skip over Morozov's analysis here since we do not have room to expound on it in full.

It is possible that in the quoted fragment Morozov does not sufficiently consider what the habit of theatrical conventionality is capable of, but certainly Euripides' reference to "snow in Egypt" is impressive.

We should not think, however, that Euripides' slip was unnoticed by anyone before Morozov. On the contrary, it is known, just like its explanation. It is stated that Euripides had in mind the melting snow in the upper Nile, which,

according to ancient geographers, caused its annual floods. Once again we are convinced that with a desire it is possible to explain any strangeness of ancient history, but is it not just proof of the ingenuity of the human mind?

Besides, the "snow in Egypt" is not the only lapse in Euripides. For example, in "Hippolytus and Phaedrus", the chorus sings:

"And her cheeks with the scythe of gold
Behind her veil she hides."

Morozov rightly points out that the "golden scythe" is an attribute of the Northern blondes, so that "the mere notion of blond beauty already shows the author's Northern origin..." ([4], p. 571).

Thus, no matter which way one looks at it, evidence of the apocryphality of "classical" dramas can be found everywhere.

§ 7. The Beginning of the Roman Chronicle

For some reason, the problem of the origin and criticism of the sources is now considered definitively solved; at any rate, there seems to be no fundamental historiographical work of the XX century in which the basis of information on the ancient history of the Mediterranean would have been subjected to critical analysis. Therefore, in order to clarify the principles underlying, say, the Roman chronicle, one has to turn to the works of the 19th century researchers.

This paragraph abstracts two books by Radzig and Martynov published almost simultaneously (1903) with almost the same titles "The Beginning of the Roman Chronicle" and "About the Beginning of the Roman Chronicle" (see [34,35]), which stand out with a thorough treatment of this question. In both books all references to writings of Livy and other Roman authors are supported by detailed references to concrete places in these writings; all of this cumbersome technical apparatus is omitted here, but a reader, who is interested in exact references, can find them all in [34,35].

It should be emphasized that neither Radzig nor Martynov are subjecting the basis of our knowledge about the ancient world to a global revision; that is why the information they report is especially valuable. Listing a huge number of oddities in the history of Rome's

initial annalistic period, they nevertheless never draw any conclusion from this set of contradictions.

Sources

Starting his research of the sources about Ancient Rome, Radzig marks, that "unfortunately, the information, at least about the first centuries of its existence is very vague; they mix up the truth with fiction so much, that sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the truth from a lie, the real event from a legendary tale" ([34], p. 3). However, since humanity wants to know its past, attempts have been made to reconstruct ancient events based on this very shaky material. "*This task gets simpler* because Roman traditional history has come down to us in the writings of very few authors; the most solid of these works is, without doubt, the historical work of Titus Livy. Many reasons lead us to prefer him to other writers, and therefore acquaintance with his work is most valuable" ([34], p. 3).

So, let us remember that most of our information about Rome is based on the information given to us by the

"Honorable Libyan" - Titus Livy. There are other Roman authors as well, but Livy is the man who gave us the "picture" of Rome - not separate, unconnected fragments.

Let us also note the author's heartfelt admission that it is easier to deal with one source than many. Indeed, different sources tend to contradict each other on many important points, since different people describe the same event differently. However, it is worth emphasizing that this is precisely the indication of the credibility of the situation being described.

By Radzig's admission, Titus Livy is not a flawless witness, and he needs to be corrected. "Especially the first decade of Livy needs such corrections. While his narrative, for example, of the wars with Hannibal (Dec. III), breathes confidence and truthfulness (? - *Auth.*), in the first books of his history Livy often loses ground under his feet; he himself must confess his ignorance, beating himself with his own weapons" ([34], pp. 3-4).

The soberest and critical minds, like Lewis, have long called **to stop speculating in the wake of Titus Livy about things he did not say**. Response to this reasonable wish was "What's the difference whether Livy's reliable or unreliable? Isn't demonstrating how unreliable was formed is already getting a few steps closer to the truth?" ([34], p. 4). But in order to make such "reconstruction" one must at least approximately determine its direction, and this direction in itself is not justified by anything except faith in the tradition, by the way, coming from the depths of the Roman Church.

Radzig rightly states that *"the authenticity of history is closely linked to the existence of a contemporary record of events, and therefore it is all the same whether to call history authentic or say that a chronicle existed"* ([34], p. 4). However, to the surprise of the reader, it turns out that **the Roman chronicles do not exist**. Here is what Martynov writes on this matter:

"The question of the timing of Roman annalism has always been a sore point for all scholars concerned with

Roman history. It is hard to find another scholarly question to which there have been so many directly opposing answers. Some, like Lewis, completely deny *early Roman annalism*, others (Breckler) attribute its emergence to the very foundation of Rome... The fact is that **the Roman annals have not reached us**, and therefore we must make all our assumptions based on Roman annalistic historians. But here, too, we encounter great difficulties, of which the most important is that annalists we, too, have in a very poor form. Many of them have reached us only in the form of quotations given by ancient writers, and of others we know only the names. The best-preserved is Livy, whose first ten books have come down to us in their entirety, and therefore in deciding the time of the origin of Roman annalistic we shall rely mainly on him... Livy represents something of a compendium of all the annalists who wrote before him... And in this respect, Livy is even more precious to us because many of these annalists have not come down to us and we learn their testimony thanks to him only. In the first ten books, Livy refers to Q. Fabius Pictor, C. Calpurnius Piso, C. Claudius Quadrigarius, Q. Valerius

Antiatus, G. Licinius Macrus, Elias Tuberon, and the archaeologist (? - *Auth.*) Cinzia. Who are these historians and to what extent can their testimony be trusted? In the first place among them must be placed Fabius Pictor, the most ancient of all Roman annalists, who lived during the Punic War. He has not come down to us in the original, and we know about him only from the quotations of Livy and, most importantly, Diodorus of Sicily" ([35], p. 3). Martynov goes on to detail arguments showing that one should treat Pictor's testimony with great caution, and cites a large number of oddities in the information that has come down to us about Pictor.

On Livy's relationship with the annalists, Radzig writes: "...Livy was not a critical writer personally checking everything written by his annalist predecessors. And these latter contributed to their works a lot of their own fabrications, capable of distorting the truth. But Livy did not check this; he was only a conscientious compiler from beginning to end. Of course, under these conditions his

testimony cannot always be taken on faith, it very often has to be corrected" ([34], p. 4).

One cannot help but wonder why Radzig is so sure of Livy's "integrity". Maybe Livy imagined all the annalists in order to pin his sins on them.

Radzig echoes Martynov: "If we turn now to the question of how Livy used his sources, we find curious facts. Some ancient annalists he hardly read, and if he quotes them, then mostly from the words of others" ([35], p. 3).

Martynov lists in detail those facts which show that **Livy never saw the original works of many writers that he quotes.** "We should not think, however, that this attitude of Livy toward his sources destroys the interest we may have in him... Traces of the original Roman annals can be found in him incomparably more easily than in other historians, and he is therefore of primary importance to us..." ([35], p. 5).

Greek Parallels

Radzig begins his study by examining the relationship between Greek and Roman history. He finds that it was Greek influence that led to Rome's interest in its past. This, it turns out, is how the Roman chronicle began: "Rome was victorious, but such were the forces of Greek influence that the Roman, returning to his home, have not given himself fully to his occupations, fieldwork, and political ranting. He's got the need (? - *Auth.*) to record in detail the struggles he had experienced. Thus was created the first real historical work in Rome, the Annals of Fabius Pictor.

...A number of annalists after Fabius: L. Cincius Alimentos, Portius Cato, Calpurnius Pison, etc., continued his work, partly repeating his words, partly making additions, sometimes introducing their own fabrications directly, and from them Livy himself borrowed ... All this makes us more familiar with the material which Fabius Pictor had at hand and which, through him, also entered into Livy's work.

...The authentic material left much to be desired in quantity, for a considerable place went to the share of fiction. A variety of Roman legends, constantly proliferating, took the place of the true events, but even these legends have not all preserved their original forms" ([34], pp. 6-7).

It turns out that "Rome even by its very origin was dependent on its eastern neighbor (Greece. - *Auth.*)" ([34], p. 7). Radzig cites a long list of **direct borrowings into the history of Rome from the history of classical Greece**. "The exploits of Aeneas in Italy and the fate of his posterity formed the Roman prehistory of Rome. But this part of its history remained a lifeless appendage. Originally this prehistory was not particularly long: it was calling Romulus to be the grandson of Aeneas; but later when the Roman annalists became acquainted with Greek chronology, they invented a whole string of Albanian kings to fill the long free interval of time. But even if on the matter of the content of historical lore, Rome's connection with Troy strikes us as lifeless and strained, it was of great

importance in another respect. It was as if it legalized Rome's right to world domination. The Romans, as descendants of the Trojans, acquired their moral justification for the conquest of the East. The poet Virgil was well aware of all this and chose the adventures of Aeneas as the subject of his Roman national poem. "He sang Rome as the ruler of the world, he needed a subject going beyond the limits of national Italian poetry" (Kulakovsky - "The Beginning of Rome"). On the other hand, proud patrician families even began to deduce themselves from the companions of Aeneas, and the clan Julius - directly from Aeneas's son, who had his name changed arbitrarily for some reason... Thus, even the very origin of Rome was affected by the harmful effects of familiarity with Greek history. And this is not the only case" ([34], p. 8).

Before us is a distinct process, apparently very late, of creating the history of Rome, with the main aim of justifying Rome's rights to world supremacy. Of course, such an end justified all the means.

We will not cite all the parallels between Roman and Greek histories; we will only note that **in the original history of Rome a great deal was borrowed from Herodotus**, in particular the description of events that took place during the "royal period of Rome" (the 7 first kings). These strange parallels continue as we move up through Roman history. Radzig describes, for example, an exceptionally meaningful parallel between the history of the Trojan War and the history of the so-called Veientian War. And yet the Veientian War is already a late period of Roman history, not its beginning. "The duration of the siege of Veii is 10 years - the same as the Trojan War and the siege of the Messenian fortress Ithome. A squad of Roman horsemen, setting out to besiege Veii, vows to return no other way than victorious. This is what the Spartans swore when they set out against Ithome. The Trojan horse releases the Greeks to attack the Trojans at such a time and from a direction from which no attack could be expected. Just as unexpectedly, the Romans appear in the temple from their undermining. The cunning Ulysses steals the palladium at Ilium, to which the fate of Troy was bound; the Roman

soldiers steal the entrails of a sacrificial animal, the pledge of their victory. Finally, the whole conduct of the war, the victories, and the failures of the Romans are very reminiscent of the adventures of the Greeks who besieged Troy, glorified in Homer's immortal poem.

The story of the Decemvirate, not quite clear to us, is also written with many Greek overtones. The romantic underpinning of the overthrow of the power of the Decemvirate evokes an involuntary comparison with the expulsion of Pisistratus' son Hippias from Athens. The historian Mommsen sees features of the same influence still in the fate of the exile Coriolanus, that Roman Themistocles" ([34], pp. 9-10).

All these facts of blatant parallelism are, in our opinion, of greater importance than is usually acknowledged. What in fact does the reference to a "Greek connotation" mean? Only one thing: **the authors of the "Roman history"** - and Titus Livy in the first place - **shamelessly copied from the authors of the "Greek history"**, or maybe even vice versa. This kind of copying

from each other indicates, incidentally, that the creation of "Roman" and "Greek" histories most likely took place simultaneously.

"On the other hand, Greek historiography also had a useful significance for the reliability of Roman history. The fact is that there was undoubtedly a chronicle in the cities of Great Greece" ([34], p. 10). Again the questions arise: where does this certainty come from? Who can present these annals? How come muffled hints extracted from the work of the very same Livy (see [34], p. 10), are being considered authoritative proof of the existence of these annals?

The Roman Tradition

Radzig goes on to examine the "Roman tradition. Here, it turns out, is how this tradition is divided: "The first stage can be called true to reality (how was it established? - *Auth.*), the second already makes some concessions to the patriotic demands of contemporaries, and the last depicts

events so that their course took place quite to the taste of readers.

A typical example of this development of tradition is the account of the Gallic pogrom... The first version, the most ancient and free of all patriotic fiction, is transmitted by Polybius. The Gauls, according to him, having concluded a treaty with the Romans, returned home unharmed. The second version, by Diodorus, already brings Camille to the scene, however, the latter beat the Gauls not on the ruins of Rome and not at the time of the surrender, but a year later... Livy has a very different account of the case. Camille here comes to the aid of the besieged in the Capitol precisely at the moment when the gold is being weighed and utters words worthy of the Romans, that it is not gold, but iron that the Romans pay. Then the battle begins, and the Gauls, yesterday's victors, are so defeated that there is no one to even report back to their homeland. To the extent that the beauty of the description wins, the truth loses" ([34], p. 11). We emphasize that, as Radzig himself claims, **this example is typical**. It demonstrates the typical

process of writing a pseudo-historical novel which Livy's work seems to be; a novel, written, of course, based on some documents (most likely few and, most importantly, whose majority have not survived, so any discussion of them is a very slippery business). At best, Livy is not a forger; he is only an amplifier, creating a novel in his inspiration, not deliberately trying to mislead anyone.

"Thus we see how the tradition was modified, passing from the pen of one author to another. New documents were discovered, additions were made, and new names, and events (e.g., Camille. - *Auth.*) that the earlier writers did not know, were invented. And if something true entered history this way, just as much was also composed. In the latter field, the annalist Valerius Antius was especially famous. Livy himself repeatedly accuses him of immoderate lying, of terrible exaggeration of numbers... And, despite this, Valerius Antius in many cases turns out to be his leader. That is why all the many Valerius of Livy turn out to be something like the heroes of faux-classical poems - selfless, humane defenders of the oppressed

plebeians. Unfortunately, it must be said that Livy's rebuke of Valerius Antius also applies, to a greater or lesser extent, to other annalists. Even the most ancient annalist of Rome, Fabius Pictor, is not blameless in this respect. Early on, Polybius already reproaches Fabius for excessive praise of his family name, and for us, this fact stands beyond doubt... Whence could such a lengthy description of the exploits of the Fabians and their extermination at Cremer be found in history? Undoubtedly, family records existed in the house of the Fabians, and these, perhaps by embellishing them, were included by Pictor in his annals. (Where did that word "undoubtedly" come from? History is replete with such "undoubtedly" suppositions - *Auth.*) The interests of his house he considered so closely connected with those of the state that he relegated the day under Kremer to the mournful pages of state life...

Thus, all the annalists contributed a greater or lesser proportion of the subjective element to history, so that the overall impression of Livy's sympathies is rather patchy: in his good faith (!!! - *Auth.*) he could not subordinate the

views of the annalists one to another and preferred to pass them on in their entirety. Along with their views, some annalists, as has been said, were contributing with outright arbitrary, fictitious incidents or were giving such details that directly reveal their artificiality... The annalists were especially imaginative when it was necessary to describe an incident in detail or to link it with others" ([34], pp. 12-13).

Radzig then considers the issue of **numerous parallels in Roman history, of constant repetitions of the same events in a slightly modified setting**. "Several such instances can be cited from Livy's history. For example, the romantic lining and circumstances that accompanied the expulsion of the kings coincide with the story of the expulsion of the Decemvirs even in minutiae. The secession of the plebeians, the law of provocation, and the law of plebiscites are mentioned three times, how can this be explained? Shall we believe the tradition and consider each of the events enumerated as true, or shall we make a limitation?" ([34], p. 13).

Morozov offers the following explanation of these parallelisms: there were separate disparate records of the same events made by different authors (and therefore diverging in detail) in the hands of Livy (or rather, his unknown predecessors, whom Livy amplified). The first compilers of "Roman History" took these fragments as descriptions of various events and, to their own understanding, placed them sequentially within the chronological scheme they had already established. We will discuss this explanation in its place. Here we will only note that, although it is still purely speculative and not supported by facts, it still explains the presence of parallelisms quite plausibly, while traditional historians (including Radzig) offer no other reasonable explanation.

Apocryphal sources

"But repetitions alone could not yet satisfy the desire of the annalists to give the public a coherent story - they began to introduce into the narrative those events which took place before their eyes" ([34], p. 14). Thereby, we

note, contemporaneity was transformed into antiquity, events happening to the chronicler's contemporaries were declared to have occurred many hundred years ago and were apocryphied into antiquity. Having no alternative to the established historical scheme, historians are forced to confine themselves to irritated statements of these facts, without drawing any conclusions from them.

"Thus explains the fact that with Livy, one incessantly comes across *leges agrariae*, which the ancient Romans did not know. And these laws played if we are to believe the word of Livy, a tremendous role in the life of Rome. The annalists also bring in the whole life of their contemporaries with debates in the senate and the forum, and it takes the place of the actual life of their long-dead ancestors. Various legends are brought into history, capable of infinitely increasing in volume" ([34], p. 14).

Radzig and Martynov elaborate on the large fragments of Titus Livy's work noted by Mommsen and other specialists in the history of Rome, which are apparent literary expansions of some fragmentary hints that reached

Livy from his predecessors. For example, one of Livy's longest stories was most likely written as a development of one of the images on Roman coins ([34], pp. 17-19). "The venerable Livonian" simply wrote a literary narrative that he thought should correspond to the image embossed on the coin. Niebuhr and Mommsen also subjected the story of Coriolanus to a thorough critical analysis. In their opinion, the whole legend of Coriolanus is clearly literary fiction, and though they think the account was carried to Livy by "tradition", and yet "the account of tradition is unreliable" ([34], p. 24). Concerning another example, Martynov writes: "This circumstance already makes us doubt the truth of Livy's story and suggest whether it is a late fiction, and since it is necessary to give this fiction some historical basis, subsequently the change was made in the fascias to the name of the consul of 362..." ([35] p. 35). ([35], p. 9). And further:

"The story given shows what arbitrariness reigned in the Roman annals... we are convinced of the sad state in which the early Roman annals have come down to us.

Miserly, consisting of a dry list of magistrates, or of fluid records of pontiffs limited in their mental horizon, it was on top of all this vigorously distorted both by patricians and plebeians" ([35], pp. 10 and 13).

Radzig concludes his treatment of the matter with the following words: "The case of the legend of Coriolanus which has been examined demonstrates how the tradition was developing and growing. Dry annalistic dates (by the way, let us note that there are no dates of a regular kind in the annals; all chronological problems were solved by historians much later, and the identification of muffled chronological indications with the modern timeline is an extremely vague matter. - *Auth.*) *became entire historical novels...* Thus, from what has been said, we can see (in what way? -*Auth.*) which untrustworthiness was introduced into the tradition before Livy and which Livy himself added to it. All the rest we may safely recognize as authentic, and the authentic is that which is drawn from the synchronic records, i.e. from the annals, to which we will now turn" ([34], p. 26).

The reader may have thought that now the mysterious "Roman chronicles" would come on the scene. But no! It turns out that we will continue to have to move along the work of Titus Livy only.

"Let's see first how Livy talks about it," Radzig suggests. It turns out that from Livy's words we can conclude that "early, in the period 451-449 B.C. writing can be considered so widespread in the city that the government finds it necessary to advertise its decrees, and that the fact of laws and tables made public deserves full confidence, no one would doubt this of course" ([34], p. 27).

First, there is no such date in Livy's text: 451-449 B.C., and secondly, one would like to see a more serious justification for the "full confidence", which Radzig offers one to be imbued with about these messages of Livy than the "of course" and "no doubt" scattered all over the Radzig's text. Especially since Radzig himself writes in the next line: "On the other hand, Livy in the same place of Book VI declares the death of written documents in a Gallic fire..." ([54], p. 27). One gets the impression that Radzig

(together with all other historians) is at a hopeless impasse: he cannot believe the whole text because of the large number of contradictions; he cannot stop believing everything either; it means that something must be believed and something not; and precisely in this basic question: which fragments of the text to trust and which not, **reigns an undivided and absolute subjectivism, not regulated by any more or less reliable method.**

Documents

Radzig gives a small list of those documents lying at the base of the history of Rome. The oldest document is considered to be excerpts from some archaic hymns, about the dating of which historians only say in a muffled voice that they belong, "in all probability, to an equally ancient epoch" ([34], p. 28). In addition, two treaties of the alliance are thought to have come down to us from the "royal era," which again, incidentally, do not have any absolute dates. "The more we will go up through traditional history, the more often the monuments of writing will also come

across. As for the objections of some who have pointed out that chronology was marked in Rome by hammering a nail into the wall of the Capitoline Temple for lack of writing, it is not worth dwelling on these objections, as in the act of hammering the nail there was rather some (? - *Auth.*) sacred significance and by no means was practical" ([34], p. 29).

Again Radzig puts it confidently: "by no means", although he gives no other justification for his opinion. At the same time, counting years by hammering nails into the wall of the temple does not seem at all senseless (given the absence of writing). Another question is to what extent this method was sufficient for the temple priests to guarantee uninterrupted counting of years for a long period.

How some official records were kept in Rome after the emergence of writing (when that was, is very difficult to say) remains a muffled mention in some sources. The chief pontiff was entrusted with the keeping of the chronicle, but reports on the form in which such records were kept are not credible and seem more like the pseudo-historical considerations of later authors again. "And he (the pontiff. -

Auth.) year after year, according to Cicero and the commentator Servius (this, it turns out, is how we know about the supposed existence of chronicles. - *Auth.*), writes the enumerated items on a wooden board covered with plaster and hangs it up in his house, so that the people may become acquainted with their contents. The testimony of Polybius, under whom these boards were still being hanged, confirms as best as possible all that has been said" ([34], p. 30). This refers only to the "official" documents. "As for the *assumptions* of Niebuhr, Schwegler, and some other historians about the existence of private chronicles, this is not worth dwelling on, knowing the circumstances of ancient Roman life. However, none of the ancient authors point to such private annals, and Mommsen was right in this case, saying that there is not even a trace of private chronicles in Roman history. The tradition is so clear about calling the first Roman historical writer to be Fabius Pictor; in this statement, all ancient historians are so unanimous that it is quite impossible to go against it" ([34]. p. 30). At the same time, Radzig tries to substantiate the assumption of the existence of some other "family" chronicles, to which

he assigns the following remarkable role: "...getting into the hands of the annalist, such chronicles, understandably, have been destructive to the truth" ([54]. p. 30).

Martynov writes about all this in detail: "... Here we find hints for the following three monuments which may be accepted as yearly annals: Annals of Pontifex (i.e. the Great Annals), Fasts and the so-called canvas books, "Libri lintei". It would seem that these monuments are quite sufficient to recognize the Roman annals as complete and even quite extensive. But in fact, it turns out quite different. Let us dwell first on the so-called Great Annals. As it is known, this was a title for a half-chronicle, half-calendar codex published (!? - *Auth.*) in 80 books in 126 B.C. by great pontiff Mucius Scevola, composed of so-called "album Pontificum" i.e. whitened boards, on which the great pontiff was writing his notes from day to day and which were exhibited in the forum for public use" ([35], p. 4-5).

It would seem that such remarkable books should serve as an inexhaustible source of quotations for all subsequent Roman historians. But here is where something

strange begins: "...almost none of the historians have references to the Great Annals. True, there is an indication in Aulus Gellius that one of his stories is borrowed from them, but even that one is not of historical content but from the field of divination... As for Livy, in his first ten books the Great Annals, or, as he calls them, the commentaries of the pontiff, are mentioned only twice" ([35], p. 5).

Martynov recounts the two places in which Livy speaks of these "commentaries". These mentions are very vague, but Martynov is inclined to believe that they testify to the possibility of "the presence of annalistic data in the Great Annals, since Livy mentions them as a monument of writing, whose loss was extremely sensitive for historians... Let us now turn to the Fascias. Everyone knows what they were. This is certainly rich material for the historian, which can serve him as a very significant aid. The main thing is that *it is already something reliable, and positive*: from year to year, the highest officials of the Republic were recorded in the fasts: consuls, military tribunes, dictators, heads of the

cavalry... But how can we reconcile with this the constant discrepancies we find in Livy at every turn in the names of the consuls, moreover, the frequent omission of them and the total arbitrariness in the choice of their names? How can we reconcile with this the impossible confusion in the names of the military tribunes, consular potestate, about which we have yet to speak? We have to admit, then, that *the pre-Gaulish pogrom fasts cannot be trusted*, since they probably burned up in the fire and, in any case, underwent further processing..." ([35]. pp. 6,7).

We can see that Martynov contradicts himself in regard to the reliability of the fasts.

Another source, the Canvas Books, is known to us from the report of the annalist Licinius Macrus, who allegedly found them in the temple of Juno Moneta. According to Macrus, they are lists of magistrates made on canvas for some reason. Livy does not particularly trust these books (or rather, quotes from them conveyed by Macrus), and Mommsen even declared the "canvas books" as forgeries, calling Licinius a thief (see [34], p. 42).

Martynov reports that "...even Beaufort pointed out that these lists should be recognized as unofficial... It should be added that Livy's mentions of libri lintae begin in 310 and end in 320, and we do not find the slightest hint of it before or after, so we can conclude that only ten years period of these lists was preserved. As for their significance for historians, it is very easy to see from Livy himself what credence they deserve. Thus, speaking of the consuls of 320, he names two different pairs of names, for the first of which he refers to Licinius Macrus, for the other to Tuberon..." ([35], p. 7). But elsewhere Livy confesses, that he gets all this information from the Books of Canvas, in this connection, Martynov fairly remarks, that "it is interesting for us, that it was possible to claim something, then the totally contrary and still refer to the same Books of Canvas, from this you may see, that *one can't have any confidence in them*, that Tuberon himself, who used them, admits" ([35], p. 7).

Besides these main sources, Livy also mentions some lists of senate decrees (which have not reached us either);

but an analysis of Livy's text shows that these lists have no credibility before 305 B.C., as "Roman historians" themselves pointed out; and after that date, we do not know where these lists were before they were lost and whether anyone used them (see [35], p. 8).

We also know of the existence of family records (not to be confused with private ones) from Livy, but none of these records have reached us. In spite of this, historians confidently describe their role: "The patricians, with their family records, have made countless distortions in it (Roman history. - *Auth.*); their ambition and hunger for fame changed the facts completely: they have given false illumination to others and, in general, *distorted Roman history beyond recognition...* Speaking of *publica monumenta*, Livy, of course, had in mind the numerous distortions made by the patricians in all the monuments of the state chronicle, which now make the work of the historian in search of the truth so difficult... The conduct of the State Chronicle, the Great Annals, the Fasti, the Triumphal Lists, etc., was entirely in the hands of this

purely patrician college of pontiffs, who thus had full opportunity to distort the facts at their discretion. And they used this opportunity in the widest measure, as is more than easy to ascertain" ([35], p. 8).

When did the family and state chronicles begin? Radzig writes: "Historians disagree on this question. Some attribute the existence of synchronous records in Rome to a very early period; others move back almost to the Punic Wars; others, although they admit that the yearly recording of events began very early, nevertheless, think that all these records perished during the Gallic invasion. The relation of the latter to the reliability of Roman history is therefore direct, and so we must now give an answer to the question: in what relation the Gallic pogrom stands to Roman history" ([34], p. 31).

What follows is a striking "logical" study by Brecker, by means of which Radzig "shows" that some (?) documents did survive after this pogrom:

"This question is perfectly resolved by Brecker. He compares the book of Livy's history before the pogrom, i.e. V, with his book after the pogrom, i.e. VI, and here, in the narrative or in the manner of carrying the historical story, there are no changes of that kind which happens when history suddenly meets a reliable point of reference - a continuous network of synchronous records. So (!? - *Auth.*) if pogroms had really wiped out pre-existing documents, then the narrative in books II, III, IV, and V of Livy would have been very different from that in the later books" ([34], p. 31).

But doesn't this prove that the Honorable Livy was writing so much later than the events he was describing that the presence or absence of any scraps of information no longer affected his historical novel?

This confuses Radzig, too, because he immediately states: "On the other hand, how can we explain Livy's report of the death of sources in ancient Roman history? One cannot reject such an authoritative statement unconditionally" ([34], p. 31).

We see, therefore, that Radzig does not want to believe this particular place in Livy, about the loss of all ancient Roman documents. In other places, as we have seen, he believes unconditionally, supplying them with words like "certainly" and "undoubtedly".

"As for his own report that after the retreat of the Gauls the Romans began to replenish their damaged records, namely allied treaties, from records of other cities, this statement must be of enormous importance for the reliability of Roman history (this is how the reliability of ancient Roman history is proved! - Author.), but the time of such references, i.e. immediately after the removal of the enemies, can hardly inspire confidence... Thus, the replenishment of Roman records at this moment appears very suspicious, but, on the other hand, the very fact cannot be denied" ([34], p. 31). Involuntarily one is reminded of the immortal proverb from 1872's "Liberal diary": "On the one hand, one cannot help but admit, on the other hand, one cannot help but confess".

For several pages, Radzig insists that the documents of Rome could not have been completely lost in the pogrom, and that "of course" some of them survived. In this effort to persuade the reader to believe in the existence of some (extant) records, Radzig appeals not only to reason but also to emotion. "What wonder that the documents of writing, which certainly could not have been the subject of the greed of the self-serving sons of the north, survived the fire and destruction of the city!" ([34], p. 32). But it turns out that, in spite of these constant incantations, others have found sufficient reason to state clearly that there is **virtually no reliable information on the ancient Roman history of the first period**: "From all this, we can see that Brecker, proving how little the Gallic pogrom has to do with the reliability of early Roman history, was quite right in this respect. But, on the other hand, the objection may be made against his arguments in defense of the correctness of Livy's story, that the nature of the accounts in books V and VI of his history fit closely together because they both are equally unreliable (there it is! – *Auth.*). This ultra-skeptical view, which rejects the reliability of the whole of Livy's first

decade, *has many representatives in scholarship* (Lewis, Mommsen, Ranke, etc.), and the dispute between them and the proponents of reliability has been going on for a long time. Niebuhr was the first to put skepticism on the legitimate ground, and after him came further research in the same direction. However, these works can be divided mainly into two types. Some scholars (e.g. Ranke, Lewis, etc.) consider the ancient period of Roman history within the first decade of Livy as irrevocably dead to us. Others, refusing to believe in its testimony, nevertheless try to interpret that testimony in one way or another and based on the tradition itself, to reconstruct and critically recover antiquity" ([34], p. 32).

So, not being able to stay on the documental ground, historians slip back to the very same "tradition" again!

Monumental evidence

Chapter 4 of Radzig's work is devoted to the significance of monumental monuments in Roman history. In addition to chronicles (which in fact, as we have seen, do

not exist), "material is also provided by monumental evidence, i.e. inscriptions on them, then all kinds of written documents, such as treaties of alliance, the various state acts, orders of the Senate, etc. But originally, the latter are rarely to be found in history. And yet this kind of material should be considered the most reliable. Some of the documents of this type, news of which has come down to us in the works of ancient historians, are of undoubted interest in the study of the reliability of Roman history. Here we encounter a very unfortunate phenomenon - these monuments are destroyed for some reason. Thus, Cicero, speaking of the treaty of Sp. Cassius with the Latins reports that the copper column, cast in memory of this event, existed, and at this moment it no longer does... The same historian goes on to note the fact that statues of Roman ambassadors murdered by the Fidenotes once adorned the Roman forum. Similarly, other monuments are also destroyed, such as the statue of Jupiter taken away by the dictator Cincinnatus of Preneste (374-380) and placed on the Capitol with an inscription. Nothing remains of it except the contents conveyed by Livy. And even that is not

the authentic content, but an expounded one... Thus many important relics of antiquity perish before they have had time to attract the attention of historians. And reports of chronicles, being deprived of such an important confirmation of their truth, lose an important part of their value, and this, unfortunately, has to be stated quite often. As if it makes one give up despite all the desire to save the shattered pieces of tradition" ([34], p. 34).

Many inscriptions have a sacred, religious character: "The year of consecration of the temple, as well as the name of the person who committed this consecration, were preserved in the words of the record on the walls of the temple and were read by later historians-archaeologists. (Let us remember once again that in fact, it takes a lot of work to identify the date indicated on the temple with one of the many calendars, but most often attributed to the reign of a particular emperor, with the modern timeline; as we will show, this kind of identification often does not stand up to criticism. - *Auth.*) Incidentally, many such inscriptions were read by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and

in this respect, his authority helps a great deal for the reliability of the reports of traditional history. (So it turns out that we are offered to prove the reliability of history simply by referring to the "authority" of Dionysius. - *Auth.*) This dignity of his was so liked by the two German historians Gerlach and Bachopfen, that they elected him as their leader, while Livy was undeservedly neglected" ([34], p. 34).

All these difficulties with "monuments" have led to a whole school of skeptics among historians who highly doubted the soundness of our knowledge of ancient Roman history: "No wonder, however, that the absence of a monument in other cases enables the defenders of skepticism to reject facts, although all their fault is only that their existence cannot be proven" ([34], p. 35).

Up to this moment, we believed naively that every fact must be proven, or at least justified plausibly and in detail, rather than referring to the "authority" of Dionysius of Halicarnassus!

Now it becomes clear why **a number of historians dispute the reliability of many facts about the state history of Rome.** Let's notice a strange detail: it turns out, that Cato has refused to use "the Roman annals" and "has written his "engines" using other, more important documents of which he does not speak" ([34], p. 35). Naturally, these mythical "documents" have not reached us either.

"Speaking of the sources of ancient Roman history, it is necessary still to mention some laws introduced in antiquity, but preserved in the historical period of Roman history. ...But here we again have to ascertain the fact that not all ancient laws have survived to the historical period; many of them have been forgotten, and, although tradition has a mention of their publication (incidentally, what would one mean with the word "publication" in the pre-typographic period? - their proclamation by a herald in the square? - *Auth.*), but without the document itself their authenticity cannot be considered unconditional. Some laws are issued, if tradition is to be believed, several times.

Isn't it a simple insertion here? Thus, the law of Valerius and Horace on plebiscites is almost the same in all three editions reported by tradition" ([34], p. 37). Again we encounter strange parallels that nobody explained.

Fasts

In the following chapters, Radzig moves on to the study of fascias. Here we will leave Radzig and follow mainly the work of Martynov, in which this issue is dealt with in much greater detail.

There are two types of fasts: consular and triumphal. "It is self-evident what importance triumphal fasts would have for the authenticity of Roman history. Roman historians attribute their beginnings to the royal era, and this is the circumstance that makes one not entirely trust the testimony of this document. Apparently, Roman writers themselves did not like to look up the material given by triumphal fasts" ([54], p. 43).

Martynov is very concerned with the question of whether the fascias can serve as reliable material for restoring Rome's chronology at all. "Let us turn our attention to the state of Livy's chronology, and consider first of all what means were in his hands for making it correct. Of course, the chief of these must be recognized as fascias... Many considerations, however, make us think that even this monument, apparently so authoritative, could lead the historian into a major error, and that it should have been treated with great care. According to tradition, the names of the consuls from the very first year of the republic were recorded annually in these fascias, and consequently, they should have served as the best chronological index" ([35], p. 14).

During the construction of the temple of the goddess Concordia, an inscription was placed on it, counting the year of the temple's construction from the consecration of the Capitoline Temple (204 years earlier). Martynov is legitimately perplexed: "There is a question: why use the starting point of the Roman chronology, the year of the

consecration of the Capitol Temple, when the builder had a different era at his disposal, from the beginning of the Republic? We have to conclude that the official era, as the monument of which the fascias served, is not accurate, at least in its early times, as even the Romans themselves admit, since they do not use it. Indeed, the fascias are riddled with irregularities that are difficult, even at times impossible, for us to make sense of. Early on, Livy was already aware of the shakiness of this main basis of his chronology" ([55], p. 14).

Not only are the fasts not a continuous list, but shattered fragments, **which can be glued together in various ways**, their text contains numerous errors, due to the unusually heavy orthography and poor preservation of the manuscript.

"These errors are at least involuntary, and it was difficult to avoid them with the scanty critical means which were in the hands of the Roman annalists. But in the fascias, we also find signs of deliberate distortions introduced into them at different times... What was the

purpose of this revision? There is only one answer: the distortions were made in order to glorify one's family, to point to its antiquity and historical importance. Early on, Cicero already mentions these "falsi triumphi", "falsi consulates", contributing so much false information to history. Livy also quite agrees with him... Of course, such an overflow of facts with distortions could not but have had a detrimental effect on Livy's chronology" ([35], p. 14).

According to Livy's own statement, the contradictions in the fasts often lead to nonsensical situations. "Let us note first of all that for the same year different annalists give different names of consuls. Livy has ten such contradictions noted in the first decade... What do these disagreements show? At any rate - that *the fasts for the first period of the Republic are unreliable*, and that it is impossible to rely on their testimony since they give rise to such contradictions in the annalists who used them. Inaccuracies in the chronology are found in Livy at every turn, and his attitude to chronology, especially in the first books, is entirely arbitrary. Many pairs of consuls are altogether

omitted: such are the consuls of 264 and 265" ([35], p. 15). "Is it possible to reconcile such flagrant inaccuracies with the assumption that the fascias in their most ancient parts reached the time of Livy or at least that of Fabius Pictor? Of course, it is possible to answer this question only in the negative sense: in the original and also in its whole volume these fasts have not reached Livy, because they were burned during the pogrom of Rome by the Gauls... Or, perhaps, for some other reason" ([35], p. 16). Martynov tries to imagine a possible mechanism for the restoration of all these lost lists, but all this is only his speculation. And he admits that all this chaos, amendments and changes, and loss and destruction of documents destroy "all confidence in the monument, which, if not for that, could have been of paramount importance to the historian" ([35], p. 17).

"Severe contradictions arise during comparison of the fragments of the lists of consuls found in various Roman historians with the extant fragments of the Capitoline fasts... This circumstance suggests that Diodorus's missing military tribunes are the fruit of the later processing of the

fasts. Mommsen gives a list of missing magistrates, and careful consideration of it further strengthens our assumption about the unreliability of Livy's list. Nine out of the seventeen names (of which two appear in the interpolation twice) belong to people we do not find indications about anywhere else" ([35], p. 17).

Martynov's final conclusion: it must be "admitted that neither Diodorus nor Livy possesses a correct chronology. Such an admission deals a strong blow to Livy's credibility, and thus to the assumption of the early emergence of annalism in Rome. If Livy's account had relied on the testimony of the latter, then at any rate the years of the most prominent events would have been known to him precisely, and yet we have just seen quite the opposite. We have seen *that we cannot even say what era exactly the Romans had*: from the beginning of the republic, according to the consular lists, or from the foundation of the Capitol Temple... Let us now turn to other circumstances which cause us to doubt the reliability of Livy's testimony. Throughout the first decade, from the first book to the last,

there is a series of disagreements among the annalists, showing the instability of historical events at the time. When we see these disagreements in some trivial case, for example, as to who took the city of Romuleia from the Samnitanans... then in such cases we hardly pay any attention to it... But we also see disagreements in the most prominent events of Roman history, in its most fundamental statements, and here we can no longer overlook them" ([35], p. 20).

Contradiction in the sources

Martynov provides a long list of such contradictions, including strange disagreements about major battles (in general, whether they were or were not), strange omissions, gaps in Roman history associated once again with incredible confusion in the fascias, shifts of major political figures along the timeline, etc. All these contradictions arise when comparing different independent sources. We will not dwell on this any further, but only say that reading these pages of Martynov's book

makes a very heavy impression: it reveals the "kitchen" of orthodox historical chronology, full of the crudest contradictions. In particular, it turns out that gaps in the sequence of events are very common, which again breaks the whole chain into separate, unconnected fragments. Historians try to explain some omissions with Livy's "inattention" ([35], p. 24), but "much more often these omissions prove the insufficiency of Livy's information, the incompleteness of his sources... Thus in 455, he says that there was an interregnum in Rome, but that its cause is unknown... a gap of considerable magnitude which Livy could no longer fill... We have already noted the shakiness, the incompleteness of Livy's information, and sometimes even its complete absence at some events. In the first period of the republic, we can see the reason for this in the absence of documents, synchronic records, etc. But we can observe the same inadequacy in all the books of the first decade, even when the historical material has grown considerably, and then the cause of it must be sought much deeper, in Roman history's most basic features indeed..." ([35]. p. 25).

The Origin of Tradition

Martynov tries to find an explanation, rightly noting that historical "tradition" was shaped by the struggle of many classes, particularly patricians and plebeians. "What effect could such dualism have had on history? Undoubtedly most unfortunate. The patrician and the plebeian could not be of the same view concerning any historical event from the evolution of the social order. Each of them, with few exceptions, was for some a triumph, for others a defeat. Of course, we cannot expect a uniform account of the facts under such conditions: the testimony of Victor, the scion of the glorious house of Phabies, and that of the plebeian Licinius Macrus cannot match each other. In short, in Roman historiography, at every step, the same distortion of truth is seen, which we notice with regard to events where the hostile interests of two nations collide: thus, the victory in the battle of Borodino is attributed by historians of both nations to their fellow tribesmen.

Even official documents bear traces of such distortions... Even on the statues displayed in the forum, according to Livy, false inscriptions were made... This circumstance points, moreover, to the strikingly poor development of historical knowledge among the Romans. We can hardly imagine, how it is possible to exhibit a statue with a deliberately false inscription in front of all? In Rome, it was possible, thanks to the insignificant distribution of historical information among the people. That the latter is correct is proven with an example of an equestrian image of some girl that stood at the upper part of Sacred Street. Some have said that it represented Valeria, daughter of Valerius Publicola, without specifying, however, why she had deserved the honor. Livy, on the other hand, says that it is a statue of Clelia, a Roman hostage who fled from Porsenna. Is it possible, under such circumstances, to trust documents extant from the early days of the Roman republic? Certainly not, and the distrust of it slips through even Livy... In our own time, this consciousness about the unsatisfactoriness of the writings of those distant times has become even more pronounced. We can have no

confidence in the fasts as to who was consul in what year, nor can we trust the Canvas Books, based on which Licinius Macrus and Tuberon give completely contradictory indications. The most reliable seems to be the documents, and even those, on closer examination, turn out to be forged and fabricated much later. The treaty with the Carthaginians, attributed by Polybius to the first year of the republic, Mommsen found to be forged and, in any case, coming from a much later time. Even the facts confirmed by numerous documents are still far from the truth" ([35], pp. 27-28). Such, for example, is the trial of Melia, carried out at the initiative of Minucius, who sought to help the Roman people in their time of famine. Minucius won the trial and enacted major reforms. "Further, for the Porta Trigemina, Minucius was rewarded with a column, the image of which we see on Augurinian family coins: it is Ionic in style, representing a man with a spear, standing on a pedestal decorated with lion heads and with ears. Finally, for his exploits, Servilius received the nickname Ahala, which we do encounter in the fascias next to the name of all Servilius. However, in spite of so much and apparently convincing

physical evidence, *the story is false from beginning to end*" ([35], p. 29). Citing evidence to justify this claim, Martynov concludes: "Thus collapses an account based on so much apparently credible physical evidence, and collapses without leaving behind it any actual historical facts from which its origin could be explained."

The only thing that remains is a few etiological myths to explain the nickname Ahala and the images on the Augurinian family coins" ([35], p. 29).

Note that **here Martynov refutes the data of numismatics**. In its proper place, we shall speak about the evidential value of numismatic material in detail.

Livy's Ignorance

Incredibly, the Honorable Livy is confused about the most basic facts about the structure of state power in Rome. "A striking example of the lack of a chronicle basis in Livy's account is his unfamiliarity with Roman institutions, even such significant ones as the tribunate of the people,

for example. Here concerning the number of tribunes we meet with the most striking, most unexpected disagreements. These contradictions begin with the very origin of this institution... Let us take another example. The Romans appointed a dictator *clavi figendi clausa* in the event of public distress, in the event of some formidable omen, a severe pestilence, etc. His appointment consisted only in hammering a nail; on the execution of this ceremony, he was resigning his office. The uniqueness of this ritual, its obvious ancientry, and finally the belief of the Romans in its mysterious and miraculous influence interested Livy greatly. In explaining its origin, however, he falls into strange contradictions. In his opinion, this nail served, due to the little spread of writing in those remote times, as an indicator of the number of years. He considers Horace, who consecrated the temple of Jupiter of Capitol in the first year of the Republic, to be the first to hammer the nail in..." ([35], pp. 29-30). However, in this connection one may note, that, perhaps, this last contradiction is imaginary, and appeared just because Martynov thinks that

at that time writing had already become a major part of Roman life. But could it be that Livy is correct here?

Continuing his list of examples, Martynov writes: "This ignorance about Roman institutions is found in Livy at every turn. For example, when the dictatorship was established, according to Livy, there was a law that only people who had been consuls were elected to this position. But immediately, in 255, Livy calls A. Postumius, who had never before been an eponym, to be a dictator. The decemvirate, according to Livy, was supposed to serve for equalizing the rights of the patricians and plebeians by means of laws, but for many reasons it is evident that its purpose is totally different..." ([35], p. 30).

Martynov gives a detailed account of all the information which has come down to us about the apparatus of the Decemvirate and concludes: "Thus, we see that Livy explains the meaning of the Decemvirate incorrectly and that the spirit of this Roman institution, as well as that of many others, is not clear to him. We have so far enumerated the arguments which speak against the

truthfulness of Livy's testimony, i.e., in other words, against the assumption that his account is based on synchronistic records. The demands the Romans made on historiography were very different from ours; their view of the historian's task was quite different, but they, too, felt the unreliability of the early period of Roman history despite the fact that they allowed rhetorical embellishments to the story, in the form of fictional accounts..." ([35], p. 30).

Martynov correctly articulates the principles that should guide the study of "ancient testimonies." "When the only trace of any event is to be recorded in chronicles, moreover, not contemporaneous to it, its reliability is very problematic in our eyes. We demand that this event should be marked by an eyewitness, but, even in this case, we put the following, specified long ago by the abbot Pulier, conditions of credibility to it:

- 1) there must be a reason to think that this eyewitness could be familiar with the fact that he conveys;
- 2) he shall have no interest in misinterpreting it.

But what to do, if concerning any epoch there is almost no testimony of the contemporaries, if even the extant scraps of annals are full of all kinds of distortions? In such a case we must see if this or that historical event has left any material evidence of its existence" ([35], pp. 31-32).

Martynov notes those places in Livy's text which might be attempted to be verified by the discovery of extant physical traces; one such trace he suggests is the statues described by Livy, granted to citizens. "We should not, however, exaggerate the importance of all these documents as aids to historical criticism. Many circumstances indicate to us their failure in this direction. First of all, let us note that although we find instances of statues in Livy, we must look upon them as rare exceptions... Finally, and most importantly, we cannot be sure that all those monuments, statues, plaques, etc., that Livy mentions, really exist. The fact is that, undoubtedly, Livy hasn't even seen many of them. Nowhere do we find traces that he examined them personally, studied them, in a word, used them in a historical sense. When we do find him

referencing various physical monuments, it means only that he found their reference in his sources, in one or another annalist... Let us see, for example, how he treats the canvas books discovered by Licinius Macrus in the temple of Juno Moneta (i.e., Juno the Memorial). Beaufort has indicated to us their insignificance as an unofficial monument, but in Livy's time, they were looked upon quite differently. Livy refers to them in quite the same way as the fascias, treats them with complete confidence, and repeatedly cites their testimony. And in spite of their great importance, it is evident from Livy's account that he never once looked into the libri lintei. He does not, however, conceal this at all: wherever he mentions them, he makes it clear that he knows them only through Licinius Macrus. For us this trait is completely incomprehensible: how is it possible to neglect personal examination of such significant monuments, having full opportunity to do so? (But have Livy had this opportunity? - *Auth.*). Thus, Licinius Macrus cites the names of the consuls of 310. - L. Papirius of Mugilan and L. Sempronius Atratin, which he found in the original text of the treaty concluded with the Ardeatians

and in the canvas books. Nowhere, by Livy's own admission, are their names found, not in the ancient annals nor in the books of the magistrates. Under such circumstances, it is so understandable to want to look through these documents personally and see with one's own eyes the accuracy of the information reported by Licinius, but Livy is alien to this inquisitive curiosity and did not look into the libri lintei even once. What could be more interesting than the spolia opima of Cornelius Cossus, with an inscription on them that would enable one to refute the testimony of all the annalists who wrote before Livy? But even here Livy does not change his habit; he did not bother to personally go and write down this highly interesting inscription and confines himself to quoting what he heard from the emperor Augustus, to whom the honor of this finding belongs. Let us recall also the forged inscription on the image of L. Minucius Augurinus... that for the phonological index we even had to resort to hammering a nail in... and we will realize that during the first four centuries of Roman history we cannot expect the physical monuments to give us much support in deciding the

reliability of Livy's account. With the entry of Livy into a period closer to the time of the first Roman annalists and, in general, more reliable, we are already much more likely to be able to verify Livy's testimony by the presence of the physical monuments which he mentions" ([35], pp. 34, 36).

However, when Martynov moves on to specific examples "proving" Livy's description of the "more reliable" period, it turns out that the case is poor with examples. He gives only two examples: the Appian Way, which Livy mentions, and a small temple (Martynov's expression) of the goddess of Concord. This is where the "proof" ends.

Then follows again our historian's confession of the plight of Livy's books. "Not always, however, do the material monuments which have come down to us from that remote epoch confirm Livy's account; it happens sometimes, on the contrary, that they serve us as proof of his infidelity" ([3.5], p. 35). Thus it turns out that the discovered "tomb of the Scipios" with the two sarcophagi and the inscriptions on them shows that "Livy and all the

annalists, whose testimony he used, just mixed up the consular provinces and consequently gave totally incorrect descriptions of the Roman campaigns in that year" ([35] p. 35). ([35], p. 35).

When Martynov tries to find out what sources Livy may have used, he can offer the reader nothing but vague speculation. The most striking thing is that in this situation Martynov suggests turning to oral tradition (!?) as the final mean of verifying Livy's reliability.

One has to hand it to Martynov, he is well aware of how utopian this proposal is. "For many reasons, however, we must conclude its comparative insignificance in this respect. In his "Study on the Credibility of Early Roman History," Lewis suggests that oral tradition survives in its pure form for only a hundred years, and only in the most exceptional cases 150 or 180. The figures may be wrong and should be increased somewhat, but what is important is that Lewis is rebelling against the almost infinite life of the tradition in which both Niebuhr and Brecker deeply believed. The inconsistency of such an assumption about

the longevity of the tradition is confirmed in Livy itself" ([35], p. 36).

Martynov also discusses the reliability of the texts of the speeches which overflow Livy's work, and which are alleged to have been delivered by certain political figures, giving in these speeches many important historical facts: "Even if we accept the truthfulness of the testimony given by Livy, it seems unlikely that tomb speeches can be long preserved in memory, being passed on from generation to generation. Suppose, however, that this, too, is possible, in which case the usefulness of these legends for the authenticity of history is highly doubtful... Proponents of the early origins of the epic among the Romans will argue that where tradition is powerless, it is replaced by popular poetry, which preserves the memory of the most remote events. Niebuhr believes that all ancient Roman history was based on the epic, that there were separate "true stories" - j dai, to quote Dionysius, of Romulus, of Tarquinius, of Coriolanus, etc. The weaknesses of this opinion are indicated to us early on by Schweigler: the j dai

must be understood as hymns, prayers of a lyrical character, and therefore having little to do with history; even less historical material was contained in the *naeniae*, the lament of the women over the coffin of the dead, and the table songs mentioned by the archaeologist Varron about the deeds of the ancestors, whose lyrical character presents no doubt. But, and beyond all this, where are the traces of the folk epic in Livy's narrative, unless one counts as such fables like the story of Coriolanus, whose later origin Mommsen proved with complete clarity? Could it be that they must be seen in the custom of soldiers, described in Livy, to sing songs during the triumph, which glorified the valor of their commanders and which, having passed to the people, could give rise to an epic? Such an assumption is unlikely due to the fact that these songs are unlikely to contain historical material... Finally, it is unlikely that these completely random, newly improvised songs could have remained in people's memory, it is easier to think that they disappeared from it as quickly as they appeared as soon as the interest in the events which gave rise to them was

replaced by a new one, which in the hectic historical life of Rome did not last long" ([35]. p. 40).

General Characteristics of Livy's Books

To summarize, Martynov expresses the following opinion about Livy's first Decade: "If we consider from this point of view the first Decade of Livy, we shall see three distinct periods... Let us begin with the first of them, embracing the whole history of Rome from its foundation up to the Gallic catastrophe, i.e. almost four centuries. Regarding this period it would hardly seem too bold to assert that we can find no trace of synchronistic records here and that because of this the first five books of Livy do not meet the requirements of modern historical criticism. The unrestricted domination of aristocratic records which distort all the facts, the forgery of documents by the higher magistrates, and the wide circulation of the mythical element, in its pure form as well as in the form of etiological tales, are its distinguishing features. All the outstanding later interpolations belong to it... The state of chronology is

the most deplorable: whole years (248, 264, 265, 378) are missing... As for the physical monuments, statues, treaties, and documents of various kinds, although it is possible to find quite frequent references to them, they do not represent reliable support... The evidence for the impossibility of relying on documents is abundant... With Livy's entry into the second period, which covers Roman history from the Gallic pogrom and almost to the second Semnitian war (Books 6-8), we seem to sense a sudden change... But is this so, and should we give credence to this testimony of Livy? In the narrative that follows, he seems to refute himself. And in this period we see the same instability, the same confusion of information, the same disagreement of the annalists... There is still an abyss before we could recognize the availability of accurate and systematic synchronistic records in this period. Of course, it is possible to assume that some outstanding events were recorded and that, thanks to this, the memory of them was preserved until later times, but whether such fragmentary, random notes in some Greek calendar can be considered chronicles, based on the idea of their more or less

continuous and consistent maintenance, is a question that is difficult to answer in the affirmative. We will also find indications in Livy himself that he considers the existence of synchronistic records at that time to be highly problematic. At the very end of the 8th book, i.e. under 432 (we remind that Livy has no direct date like this. - *Auth.*), he notes that the instability among facts of that time is absolute" ([35], pp. 43-44).

When Martynov turns to the rest of Livy's books, he suggests that the situation is better here and that one can assume the existence of synchronistic records which might have been used by Livy. In doing so, Martynov constantly repeats that amendment must be made for "those times" which did not know strict historical criticism and viewed history as a moral and ethical subject rather than a scientific one. The number of uses of the words "certainly" and "undoubtedly," which he does not disdain to apply to the books of the first decade as well (e.g: "In the 9th and 10th books we already find many references to such undoubtedly existing monuments as the statue of Q.

Marcius Tremulous, the victor over Guernics..." [35], p. 44), increases dramatically as we move on to the rest of Livy's books. In short, Martynov goes to great lengths to convince us that, after all, Livy's last books should be trusted to some extent. Here is how he justifies the possibility of such trust: "The description of the construction of some temple is now accompanied by such details (in the text of Livy! - *Auth.*), that certainly, because of the interest it excited at the time, it was written down by contemporaries with all possible accuracy. So, for example, the account of the construction by the dictator G. Junius Bubulcus of the temple of the goddess of Salvation represents rather a very accurate account of the course of the work than a simple mention of a known fact in the chronicle. We will find here indications of all prominent moments of the construction of this temple... Such precision indicates already a relatively high degree of correctness and consistency in the annals" ([35], p. 45). ([35], p. 45). That is how, reader, it turns out, one should be convinced of the reliability of this or that story: the more detailed the account, the more credible it is! These fragments of Martynov's text give the impression of

a bad joke, all the more striking after the sober discussion in the preceding paragraphs. All of the arguments that Martynov makes (and there aren't many) to justify the reliability of Livy's later books are based on the same analysis of Livy's text in terms of details of the narrative. Read the following: "From the middle of the 5th century, the most detailed descriptions of the terms of the treaty appear in Livy's already... What a striking accuracy, what a careful minuteness there is in their presentation! It is difficult to imagine that Livy, or, if he borrowed it from somebody else, any of his predecessors, had reached such a degree of bad faith that he made up all these points of the treaty from his head; much more likely he had the actual text of the treaty at hand" ([35], p. 46).

It is difficult for us to comment on this "proof". After all, Tacitus wrote no less detailed "History", and yet about its reliability we have already given some doubts above.

Further, Martynov's text reads like purely humorous work. Cicero in one place speaks vaguely of the following episode: after the victory at Heraclea, Pyrrhus sent to

Rome his associate, the Greek Cineas, to make peace. But the war resumed as a consequence of Appius Claudius' performance before the Senate. According to Cicero, this speech was recorded. And so in Livy, this episode is turned into a colorful dramatic scene that captures the imagination of the reader and, more importantly, historians. Martynov offers this description: "The Senate was about to give in to his propositions (i.e. those of Pyrrhus. - *Auth.*), when aged blind Appius Claudius, a famous censor of 442, arose from his seat and delivered a thunderous speech reproaching the Senate for cowardice and asking it to reject the peace. His eloquence had the desired effect, and the war resumed..." ([35], p. 46). What conclusion can be drawn from such a situation? Martynov, for example, for some reason has decided that Livy had the original (transcript?) of this speech before him, and he ends his description of the episode with the following words: "Thus we see, that as early as the second half of the 5th century there was certainly historical records, which moreover in its original form has reached the time of the first Roman historians-analysts" ([35], p. 47). But for us, it

seems that a talented writer Livy, or rather an unknown very late author, of the Middle Ages and Renaissance most likely, inspired by a brief fragment, created an expanded picture and included it in his novel.

Then Martynov sets out Mommsen's hypothesis of the form in which annalism emerged in Rome, and examines the possible sources on which it could be based. Martynov finishes this discussion very dejectedly: "Such is Mommsen's theory about the origin of historiography in Rome, a very slender theory, despite its many weaknesses, the main of which is that we will never find any positive references to *liber annalis* or, as Mommsen calls it, *Stadtbuch*, and that its existence is therefore completely hypothetical" ([35], p. 48).

The question of the possible existence of the annals has been repeatedly raised by historians because of its significance. Martynov discusses different variants of hypotheses, but each time he ends with the following words: "Let us repeat once more, however, that the assumption of the existence of *liber annalis* is a pure

hypothesis, which has for itself, mainly, only that it causes fewer objections than all the others" ([35], p. 49).

Martynov concludes with another remarkable argument for the reliability of the latest books. In both the first and last books, he notes, there are many errors, contradictions, etc.; but the errors in the last books seem to him less erroneous than those in the first books, although the nature of the errors is the same.

Conclusion

We see that almost all information about the initial period of the history of Rome is based on the work of one person - "The Honorable Libyan", which, moreover, can be trusted only with great caution, because his work is just a historical novel.

The difference between our point of view and that of the historians consists only in one thing: whereas they believe that Livy's historical novel was written in the first

century B.C., we together with Morozov believe that it was done (in its final edition) during the Renaissance.

At the same time, we do not claim that the entire content of Livy's novel is solid fiction. It most likely reflects some real events, but when and where these events took place is another matter.

The same applies to Tacitus, for whom, unlike Livy, it is almost certain that the real author is Poggio. There is no doubt that, in his composition, Poggio relied on a tradition whose origins we do not know, merely embellishing and coloring its scanty canon with the fruits of his imagination.

Once again, let us turn our attention to Morozov's explanation of the parallelisms of Roman history. This is one of his most important considerations, the scope of which is broader than it first appears. For example, it also applies to fascias.

The presence of omissions in the fascias turns them into a set of separate fragments, many of which may turn out to be simply different versions of the same piece of

history, written down by different people and describing the same people by different names. The fact that based on such data some unknown annalists, whose writings have not reached us, "reconstructed" the history of Rome raises a heavy suspicion that this reconstruction was an undividedly subjective procedure, which was taken later by European chroniclers as reliable and managed to become a "tradition" by the time when at last historians dared to subject the basis of our chronological knowledge to timid critical examination. The blind faith that the major chronological grid has been established correctly as a whole, has led all critical analyses to focus on the minor stirrings of chronology, on minor attempts to smooth over the numerous contradictions in history. Because, assuming that the individual pieces of the fasts must go sequentially, then all these numerous omissions and confusion can lead, at worst, to fluctuations of about ten years maximum, which is a negligible amount compared to the chronological shifts that would occur if we accept the Morozov's consideration and assume that the fasts should be arranged not sequentially, but in parallel.

Note, by the way, that Morozov's hypothesis does not contradict the real history of the origin of fascias. Here is what the experts in the field of source studies write: "...historiography begins with studies of collecting nature, where only the testimonies of legends and monuments are compared. These works - *the result of painstaking work and remarkable wit* - became for posterity an invaluable foundation for the further study of history. Especially should be noted the valuable annals of Sigonius (*fasti consulares*)" ([29], p. 1).

Thus, it turns out that **the fasts were composed in the 16th century by Sigonius**, the same Sigonius who was "jokingly" falsifying the Roman manuscripts (see § 2). The reference to "painstaking work" and "remarkable wit" means that when he was preparing the fascias for printing, Sigonius (and others like him) was putting them in a decent shape in some sense, editing and supplementing them according to his intelligence and on quite a significant scale. And despite all this, modern historians seriously consider

the composition of Sigonius to be a reliable foundation of Roman history!

§ 8. Roman Calendar

General information about the calendar

In the most general way, a calendar can be defined as a way of conveniently counting relatively long periods of time. Idelson writes: "We are so used to using calendars that we do not even realize how important the role of an orderly counting of time is in our lives and all our thinking; meanwhile it is easy to see that **no culture is possible without it.**

How is such a numbering system psychologically conceivable? It seems to be admissible only when the calendar has a constant and lively connection with *the external nature*. There is a great difference between counting time, on the one hand, and counting or measuring some other object or quantity, such as the change in distance between two points. The road we measure existed and will exist before and after the process of measuring, but each day that we number or count disappears in the past and will never return. But if we have the certainty that

this or that phenomenon of nature will repeat itself after a certain interval of time, and then will return after the same number of days and so on without end, it would be natural to begin and end the counting of days on just such a periodic phenomenon... Seeking sufficiently vivid and well-defined periodic phenomena in nature is how all cultural people were approaching the construction of the calendar...

...But ...vaguely defined climatic periods ...are insufficient to order the counting of time... One of the most significant stages of cultural development was passed when it was learned that such (clearly defined - *Auth.*) periods can and should be sought among the phenomena of the starry sky... The annual circle of the Sun, the monthly circulation of the Moon, and for some people the 12-year circle of Jupiter became the basic units of the calendar account...

But... two enormous difficulties had to be overcome. *First*: the specified repetitions of celestial phenomena are roughly noticed by anyone who is only generally interested

in them; but to determine them accurately and, if I may say, "acutely", one needs a long series of skillful observations, mathematically understood and processed. Counting from one new moon to another, and keeping the exact count of the days and **hours** respectively of the interval, we become convinced that the periods following each other are *unequal*; the same is true for other observations of celestial phenomena: the movements of the solar system's bodies are uneven - this is the main difficulty in their study; one must skillfully combine the results to derive some average, important in the calendar, the length of the interval. All this constitutes the task of astronomy... *Second*: the calendar unit, e.g. year, month, is accepted and convenient only when it consists of a whole number of days. But periods found from astronomical observations are never expressed in days as a whole number. Therefore, the calendar unit inevitably comes out erroneous against its astronomical prototype, over time this error is accumulated, and calendar dates no longer correspond to the astronomical state of affairs. How does one smooth these discrepancies? This task is purely arithmetical; it leads to the

establishment of calendar units with an unequal number of days... and the definition of rules of their alternation...

As soon as both of these difficulties are overcome, the calendar system is complete. It takes its course as if independent of astronomy: **only under this condition** can it be not only correct but also widely understood..." ([21], p. 4). ([21], pp. 4-9).

Here, first of all, it is important to note that **astronomical observations are necessary for the creation of a full-fledged calendar**. But how in ancient times could the necessary precision in observing, say, the length of the year be achieved? The usual answer is that with sufficiently long and regular observations any required accuracy could be achieved. What is forgotten, however, is that for long, consistent and regular observations it is necessary to count the days confidently and without confusion year after year, that is, **it is necessary to have a regular and correct calendar**. Even modern astronomers do not like to use the Gregorian calendar: they prefer the Julian calendar (old style) with a more regular leap year system. The simplest

regular calendar is the Julian calendar. It is therefore safe to say that **without the Julian calendar any precise observational astronomy is impossible.**

There is no vicious circle here since no particularly accurate astronomical observations are required to create the Julian calendar.

Without any astronomy, people have long known that the year is divided into four seasons, that there are usually three full moons in each season, and that there are about 30 days between two full moons. This gives a baseline length of a solar year of about 360 days.

But when the need for a regular calendar arose, it must have been quickly (within a few decades) discovered that a calendar based on such (or similar) year was not climatic, i.e., the beginnings of the seasons and the farming seasons do not remain on the same dates in it, but shift continually. Whether the corrections were made "by trial and error", or at this moment some simple astronomical facts were involved, is difficult to judge, but it is clear that

rather quickly the original figure was corrected and the year was counted as 365 days. This was the creation of the first, more or less satisfactory, regular calendar. But 60-80 years should have been enough time to notice the fallacy of this calendar as well and to notice the need for a quarter-day correction. Here, of course, rudimentary astronomical observations were necessary. Thus, we must postulate that at this time astronomy (apparently in the form of astrology) had already taken its first steps. Generally speaking, the type of used calendar allows us to evaluate the accuracy of achieved astronomical observations, since there is no doubt that **each newly introduced calendar was considered by its authors to be perfectly climatic**, as no one would want to set a calendar with a known error, already rendering it unusable in several tens or hundreds of years. This "climatic requirement" should be at the heart of any rational discussion of calendar problems.

When was the first calendar introduced? No reason can be seen for why a precise calendar was needed during the period of the tribal system. As ethnographers report

(see [21], p. 5), primitive tribes quite manage with an approximate division of the year into climatic periods. This division is sufficient both for the seasonal works of a farmer and for seasonal migrations of cattlemen.

On the contrary, it is difficult, if not impossible, for a state with a developed economy to do without a calendar. The problems of tax collection and interest collection, the regular supply of the court and army (especially in a campaign), calculating contractual supplies, etc., etc. - all of this requires a regular and correct calendar. Without much risk of making a mistake, it can therefore be argued that the calendar appeared at the same time as the class state.

In principle, a calendar is not necessary for religious worship. Religious festivals can be dated without a calendar ("the harvest day", "the first full moon of winter", etc.). However, if the idea of a calendar has already emerged and religious festivals have been timed to certain calendar dates ("The New Year's Day," etc.), then a proper calendar (or, more precisely, a calendar considered to be proper) becomes absolutely necessary. If the sacrifice to

the god is scheduled for a certain day of the year, it would be inadmissible animadversion of god and blasphemy to perform it on any other day.

Let us now apply these general theoretical points to the Roman calendar.

The Roman Calendar

About the calendar used by ancient Romans, our information "comes from two different sources: from living tradition of its transmission, reaching the present day (!? - *Auth.*), and from ancient documents and messages of antique authors" ([12], p. 97). According to these sources, it seems like the Romans had a 12-month year of 355 days, alternating with a 13-month year of 382-383 days. Thus, the average duration of the Roman calendar year was a full day more than the true one. Sources report that as early as the fifth century B.C. attempts were made to correct this calendar system and bring it in line with the solar year. "But these reforms did not work... Apparently, the Romans at some time abandoned schematic additions to the calendar

and "supplemented the year when the necessity would arise. From the time of the Second Punic War until the reform of Caesar... the pontifices adjusted the calendar as they saw fit. Like the Greeks... the Romans sought to have certain sacrifices performed accordingly at the same time of the year... In reality, intercalations (insertions of the month - *Auth.*) became a tool of politicians in their struggle for power and were often made arbitrarily, without regard to the time of the year...

Apparently, any attempts to establish clear intercalation cycles for this calendar are in vain... The occasional evidence available... allow only a general conclusion that between the First Punic War (264 B.C.) and the Second (218 B.C.) the Roman calendar was more or less in line with the Julian calendar, lagging perhaps a few weeks behind it; that during the Second Punic War... additions to the year were neglected, so that by 190 B.C. the Roman calendar was 117 days ahead of the Julian one (what accuracy in estimating the error! - *Auth.*); that this

difference was reduced to 72 days in 168 B.C., and in 46 B.C. the lag was 90 days" ([12], pp. 40-41).

All this information strongly contradicts the theoretical positions established above. How could the believing Romans make sacrifices to the gods on obviously "wrong" days? How could state fisc and private enterprise, inseparably linked to contracts for time, function under the conditions of calendar chasms? It is enough to put these questions out for the apocryphal and fantastic nature of the "ancient Roman" calendar to become obvious.

Moreover, historians themselves admit that in Ancient Rome "the crops of grain and olives were harvested in time, at the end of May and in November respectively" ([12], p. 41). Where did the difference of 117 days go? In order to solve this contradiction, Bickerman has to assume that the economic life of Rome was governed by some other "ideal" calendar, "which did not depend on the vagaries of the official calendar" ([12], p. 41). The question is, who was responsible for the correctness of this "ideal" calendar? And what kind of calendar was it? The Julian calendar?

Bickerman tries to answer these questions when discussing the equally confusing "Babylonian calendar." Forced here, too, to assume the existence of an "ideal" farming calendar, he writes:

"It is quite possible that the farmers and merchants trusted more to the star (?! - *Auth.*) calendar,... which did not depend on the vagaries of official timekeeping" ([12], p.19). One can only lift his hands here.

Thus we can see that the astronomically-calendar considerations also point to the apocryphality of "ancient" literature (which IS our source of knowledge about the "Roman calendar").

Roman Days of the Month

Let us conclude with one purely technical issue necessary for understanding ancient dates: the Roman system of naming the days of the month.

The Romans had three words: **calends**, **nones**, and **ides**, to name three special days of the month. All other

days were counted back from these days, as if in their anticipation.

In each month, the calends is the first day of the month (for example, the "March calends" are March 1).

In March, May, July, and October, the nones are the 7th day of the month (the May nones are May 7) and the ides are the 15th (the October ides are October 15).

In the other months (April, June, August, September, November, December, January, and February) the nones are the 5th day of the month (January nones are January 5) and the ides are the 13th (August ides are August 13).

This strange system of counting days managed to hold on in some places **till the Middle Ages**. Finally, let us point out that the Roman year began in March.

Summary of the chapter

1. During the Renaissance (and on its eve) there was every opportunity for the activity of apocryphers, amplifiers, and outright falsifiers (see § 3).
2. Numerous falsifications of the time have been uncovered by historically-philological scholarship, but there is no certainty that they have all been uncovered (see § 2).
3. The authenticity of some of the most important ancient historians (Tacitus and Livy) raises serious doubts (cf. §1 and §7).
4. There are theoretical reasons to think that all ancient writings are apocrypha of the Renaissance and its eve (cf. § 5).
5. These considerations are supported by:
 - suspicious circumstances of the finds of ancient writings in all cases for which relevant information is available (see § 1 and § 4);
 - untraceable history of manuscripts of ancient works beneath the eve of the beginning of book printing (see § 4);

- contradictory distribution of ancient literary genres over time, as well as the lapses and some peculiarities of ancient plays exposing their late origins (see § 6);
- complete impossibility for a calendar attributed to the ancient Romans to exist "in nature" (see § 8).

In addition, it turned out (see § 7) that the notion of the vastness and reliability of traditional information about the history of the ancient world, brought up by popular literature and historical novels, contradicts the facts. In fact, our ideas about, say, ancient Rome are based on assumptions and rather uncertain and disputed interpretations of essentially a single text.

Aren't there any objective and reliable ways of determining the exact time of writing of this or that composition? Theoretically, there are such ways. For example, one could try to determine the time of a manuscript by the solar or lunar eclipses described in it. If the description is sufficiently detailed, then astronomy

should presumably unambiguously localize the manuscript on the temporal axis.

We will discuss this method in the next chapter.

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